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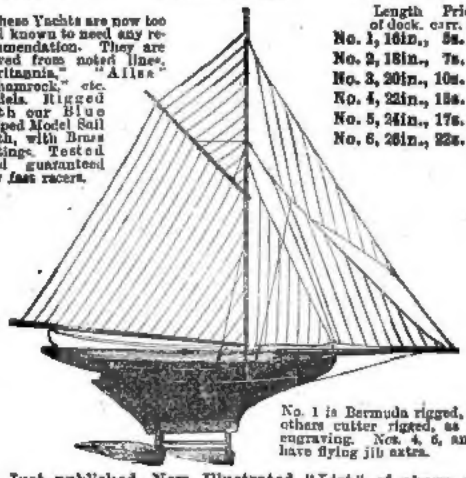

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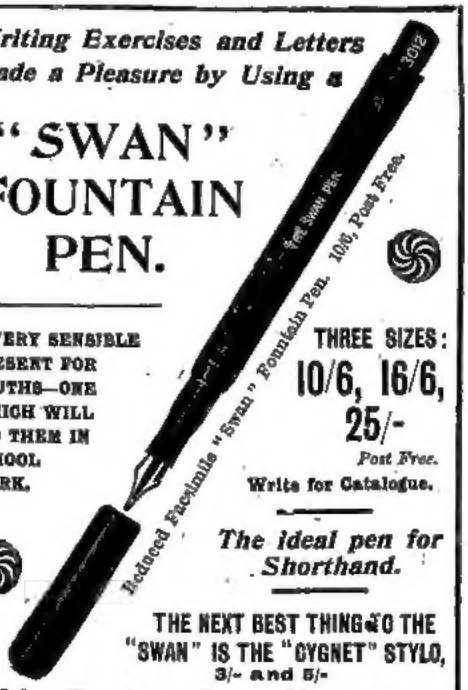

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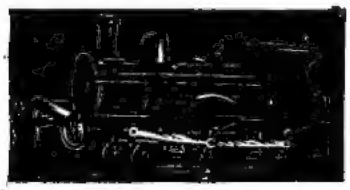

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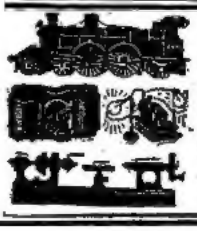

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Contents for May, 1900.

MR. C. B. FRY BATTING ... ... *Frontispiece*

PAGE.

PUZZLE: "BLACKS AND WHITES" 97

LORD GEORGE SANGER AND HIS CIRCUS ... ... W. SIDEBOTHAM 99
With Illustrations from Photographs by GEORGE NEWNES, LTD.

A WONDER OF THE WAR 105

"MY BEST FRIEND" ... ... BY READERS OF "THE CAPTAIN" 106

SOME ENGLISH SCHOOLS 107
DANIEL STEWART'S COLLEGE; SCHOOL HALL, BURY ST. EDMUND'S; KESGRAVE HALL, IPSWICH; DENSTONE COLLEGE; CONGREGATIONAL SCHOOL, CATERHAM.

DESBOROUGH'S CHEEK ... ... H. ST. JOHN SEAMER 108
Illustrated by T. M. R. WHITWELL.

SOME HINTS ON NET PRACTICE, AND ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS
C. B. FRY 112

THE THREE SCOUTS. (CHAPTERS V.—VIII.) ... ... FRED. WHISHAW 115
Illustrated by GEORGE SOPER.

"MY FAVOURITE CHARACTER IN FICTION." ("ADAM BEDE.")
ARCHIBALD NEALE 271

BRITAIN'S BIGGEST STEAMSHIPS ... ... J. A. KAY 128
With Illustrations from Photographs.

TALES OF GREYHOUSE SCHOOL. (NO. 7, "J. O. JONES.")
Illustrated by E. F. SKINNER. R. S. WARREN BELL 136

WHEN YOU LEAVE SCHOOL. (X.—HOW TO JOIN THE NAVY.)
With Illustrations from Photographs. A. E. MANNING FOSTER 143

THIRTEEN MULES AND AN ASS ... ... G. WOOD 146
Illustrated by G. M. DODSHON.

HOW THEY BROUGHT THE GOOD NEWS ... ... A. WILLIAMS 149
Illustrated by T. M. R. WHITWELL.

THE STAMP COLLECTOR. (A CHAT ON PERFORATIONS.) ... H. M. GOOCH 152
With Illustrations.

[Continued on next page.

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CONTENTS—*continued*

		PAGE.
ACTON'S FEUD. (CHAPTERS V.—VIII.) Illustrated by T. M. R. WHITWELL.	FRED. SWAINSON	155
WHAT WE THINK OF BOYS	BY TWO GIRLS	167
WHAT THE OWL THINKS With Illustrations.	...G. H. BODEN	168
STAGE STRUCK Illustrated by GEORGE SOPER.	MURDO MUNRO	170
HOW TO CATCH TROUT With Illustrations.	GEORGE A. B. DEWAR	176
"THE CAPTAIN" PUZZLE CORNER	"SPHINX"	179
HOW SHORTHAND WRITERS "TRIP"	OLIVER MCEWAN	180
"THE CAPTAIN" CHESS CORNER		181
SCHOOL MAGAZINES REVIEWED		182
SPECIAL PAGES	CONTRIBUTED BY READERS	184
"CAPTAIN" COMPETITIONS FOR MAY		187
"THE OLD FAG"—EDITORIAL...		188
ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS		190
RESULTS OF MARCH COMPETITIONS		192

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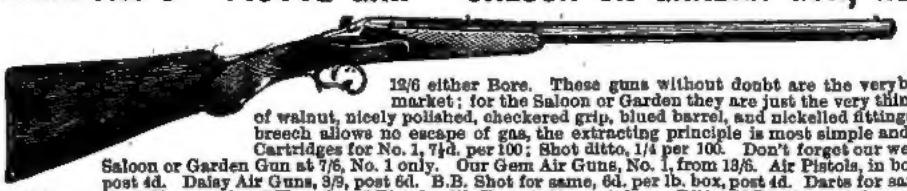

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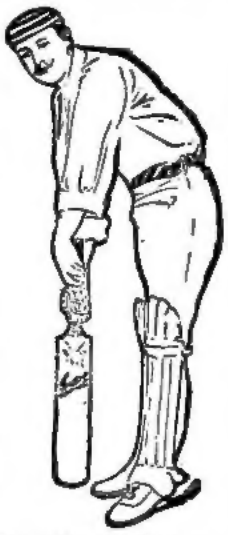

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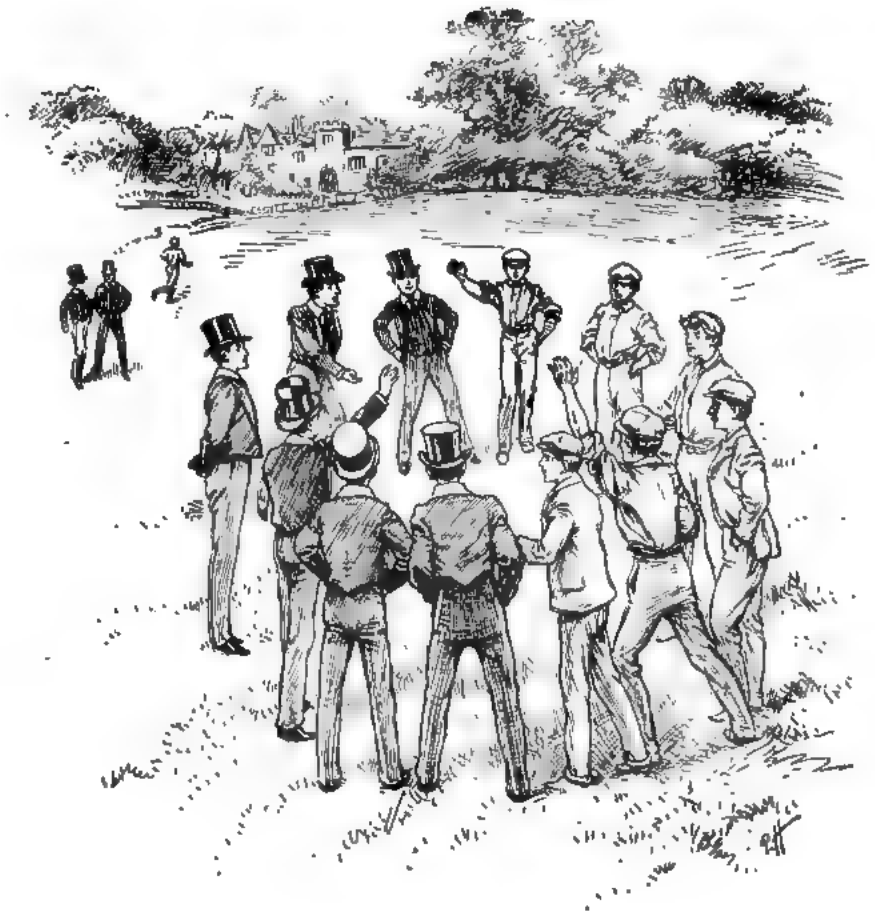

THE "BLACK'S" AND "WHITE'S" PUZZLE.

(See page 191)

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MR. FRY BATTING.

"That's gone for six, I think!"

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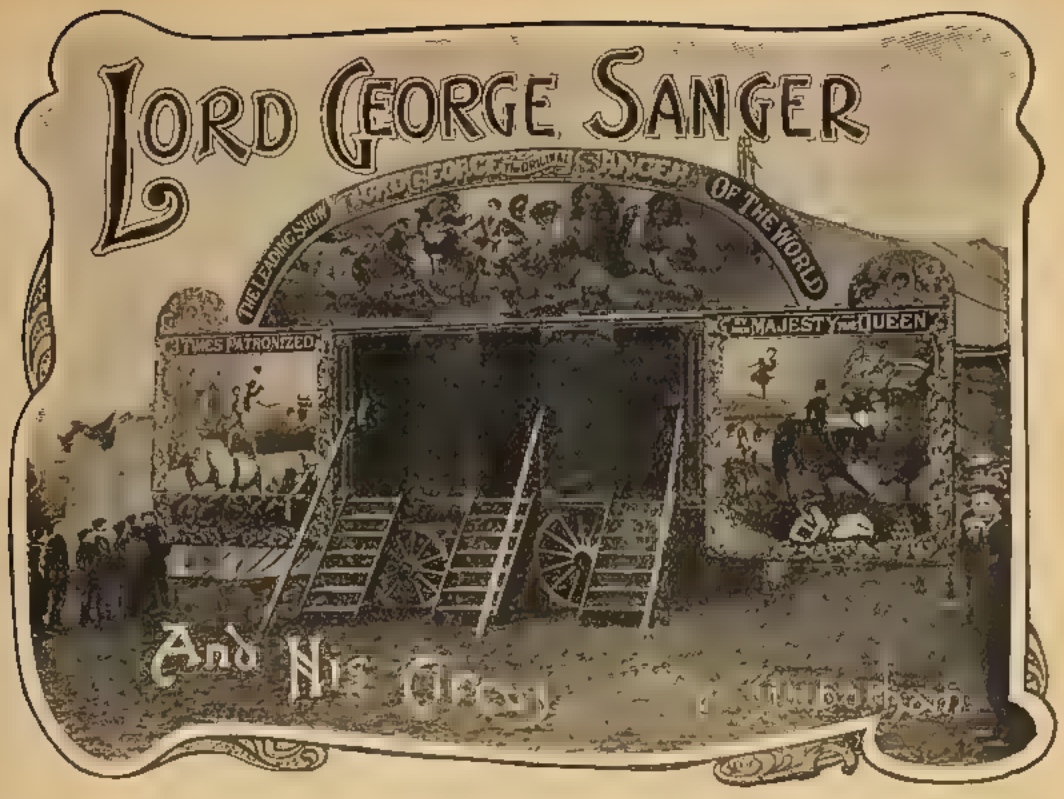
LORD GEORGE SANGER



With Illustrations from Photographs by Geo. Newnes, Ltd.

LORD GEORGE SANGER has, in various capacities, been before the public for a period of over sixty years, and his name is probably more familiar to both young and old than that of any other living showman—in fact, he might rightly be described as the "Father of the Circus," as we now know it. In the course of his long and successful career he has met with many exciting adventures, and has also had the distinguished honour of performing before Royalty on several occasions.

In order to get him to relate some of his experiences, I recently visited the Crystal Palace, where for several months he had been giving performances. The time of my visit proved most opportune, for he had practically completed the necessary arrangements for his provincial tour. All the cars which form such a prominent feature in the procession through the various towns had been lavishly re-decorated, and the process of "packing"—a huge undertaking when the show has been stationed some time in one place—was well advanced. I found Lord George superintending the final arrangements, but, on stating the object of my visit, he at once courteously acceded to my request.

The father of the present famous circus proprietor (who was the youngest son of a well-to-do farmer in Wiltshire), when he was about eighteen years of age, came on a visit to the metropolis, and, while standing on London Bridge, he was seized by the press gang and sent to sea, where he remained for upwards of ten years. During that time he saw much active service, and was seriously injured on several occasions. Lord George related with evident pride that his father was close to the hero of Trafalgar when the latter received the wound which resulted in his death.

On returning home invalided the young seaman received an annual pension of £10 for the services he had rendered to the country. Shortly afterwards he met in Bristol a young lady, whom he had known intimately in his earlier years, and who at that time was a lady's maid. He eventually proposed to her and was accepted, and, despite the fact that he had neither trade nor profession, they were married. He invested his first pension in a small "show," with which he travelled throughout the country, and which, by judicious management, was gradually enlarged from time to time, until it became a very lucrative concern. It will thus

Photograph by HARNESSING THE PONIES. *Geo. Newnes Ltd.*

be seen that Lord George has been connected with the "show" business all his life.

I asked him to give me some details of his first appearances in public, together with a brief history of his subsequent career, and he replied with a smile—probably at my innocence—"That is rather a big order. My reminiscences extend over sixty years, and some of my adventures have been so remarkable that a full account of even two or three of them would probably take up all the space of your valuable magazine. But I will give you a few details as they occur to me. The first time that I took a really prominent part in a public performance was at the great fair which was held in Hyde Park in honour of the Queen's Coronation. My father was present, in company with most of the leading showmen of that day, including the great Richardson (who, I believe, was brought up in a workhouse, but who died worth £250,000), Wombwell, Hilton, Atkins, Stirling, Gregory, Webster, and a number of others; while the bill of fare provided was as extraordinary as it was varied. There were no fewer than nine temples of the drama, and the 'curiosities' on view have seldom been equalled. Among others, there were great giants, some of them of astonishing tallness—the Misses Cockayne, American twin sisters, each of whom was over 7ft. high; Miss Scott, the two-headed lady; Dan Hartley, who was the heaviest man that we have had since the days of Daniel Lambert, and whose waist was larger than that of any dray-horse; Madame Stevens, the pig-faced lady; and a host of others of equal celebrity. With regard to Madame Stevens, this curiosity was not a woman at all, but a bear, whose face and paws were shaved several times a week! The animal was strapped in a large chair, which was placed at the back of the stage, shortly before the 'show' was opened, and was attired in a dark dress, a shawl, and white cap, over which was a bonnet. I became connected with one of the showmen, and gave a conjuring entertainment, which was well received. One of the other performers was a man who went under the name of the 'American Malabar.' He was an admirable juggler, besides which he used to 'balance' a young donkey that was strapped to a ladder; but, on the second day of the fair, the animal was stolen, and I agreed to become a substitute. The man, however, had earlier in the day taken too much to drink. When I had got to the top of the ladder I discovered that he was not in a fit condition to perform, and my nerves gave way, with the result that I and the ladder came down on to the heads of the spectators.

"After that I returned to my father, and assisted him. I then conceived the idea of having performing birds and white mice, and having successfully trained them I gave performances in public. This was the first time such an exhibition had been seen, and the amount of patronage we received was wonderful. The next addition to the 'show' which I introduced were the 'Living Pictures,' the chief item of which was Cruickshank's illustration of the 'Bottle.' I engaged a number of young men, boys, and girls from Mile End and instructed them carefully as to what they were to do. I also got them special dresses for their various

Photograph by *Geo. Newnes, Ltd.*

HARNESSING THE HORSES FOR THE PROCESSION.

parts. This exhibition also 'caught on'; indeed, so great were the crowds which came to see it that the police informed us that it would be necessary to put an end to the 'nuisance.' I, however, 'squared' them, and continued the performance till it began to get played out. By this time I had become thoroughly *au fait* with all the inner working of a 'show.' I could see what would 'go down' with the public, and as I lacked neither initiative nor pluck, I began to be looked upon as one of the rising men in this line of business.

"There were at this time several well-known conjurers who adopted the title of Professors of the Black Art, and not to be out-done, I got a black velvet suit made with a tunic, round which I had a belt with a large fancy buckle. To this belt was fastened a bugle. My hat was a 'dream in black'; in shape it resembled a smoking cap, but it was trimmed with large ostrich feathers. Round my neck I had 'frills,' and my boots were trimmed with beads. The first performance I gave in my new character was at Stepney Fair. I was well up in 'patter,' and after describing the wonders of the Black Art, and challenging all the 'wizards' of the country —I called myself the 'Professor of the West' — I told the people that the price of admission 'on that occasion' would be only one penny. This was also for a time a gigantic success."

Photograph by *Leslie Dudman & Co.*

LORD GEORGE SANGER.

Interrupting him, I asked: "To what do you attribute your early success?"

He replied: "To judicious advertising, a good programme,

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and last, but not least, low prices of admission."

"I presume that when you gave your exhibition at Stepney it was on your own account?"

"Oh, yes! I left my father before then. While at Stepney I met Miss Ellen Chapman, who was professionally known as 'Madame Pauline de Vere, the Lady of the Lions.' I had known her a great number of years, but had not seen her for a long time. She was then in the service of Wombwell, and, two or three years previously, had had the distinguished honour of performing before the Queen, and other members of the Royal Family, at Windsor. Wombwell's menagerie was at the time at Windsor Fair, and the proprietor received a command to give a performance before the Court. The menagerie was placed in the quadrangle of the castle, and a brilliant company was invited for the occasion. In addition to the Queen and her Consort, there were present the Duchess of Kent, the Prince of Wales, Prince Alfred, the Princess Royal, Princess Alice, the ladies and gentlemen in waiting, members of the *élite* of the aristocracy, foreign ambassadors, etc. Her Majesty took the greatest interest in the wild beasts, asking a number of questions about them. The 'Lion Queen' desired to enter the den containing the monarchs of the forest, but Her Majesty declined at first to allow her to do so; but later, when Miss Chapman had given her performance before the gardeners and others employed at the castle, together with the masters and boys of Eton College, who had also been invited, the Queen expressed a desire to witness it. The cages containing the wild animals were placed immediately in front of the windows of the royal apartments, and Her Majesty and Court witnessed the exhibition. At the conclusion the Queen presented Miss Chapman with a gold watch and chain, and expressed pleasure at the wonderful command she had over the wild beasts. I married the 'Lion Queen' in 1850. Up to that time I had been known as the 'Great George,' but now I adopted the title of 'Lord George.' While travelling in the West of England, a few years later, I was permitted to give my conjuring entertainment before the Czar, who was then on a visit to this country, and he was much pleased, especially with the 'inexhaustible bottle,' from which I obtained about half-a-dozen different drinks."

Photograph by *Geo. Newnes, Ltd.*

"ARCHIE," WHO RAN AWAY FROM THE CRYSTAL PALACE

"In the course of your travels were you ever introduced to any prominent statesmen?"

"Yes," answered Lord George, "several; and I have also performed before nearly all the crowned heads of Europe. I was introduced to the late Lord Beaconsfield, when he was coming from the German capital to this country after the signing of the Berlin Treaty. I was

Photograph by *Geo. Newnes, Ltd*

LORD GEORGE SANGER'S ABODE

then performing at Viviers, in Belgium, and, as the train by which the distinguished statesman was to travel always stopped at that station, the whole of the interior was lavishly decorated in his honour. My band struck up the 'National Anthem' as the train was brought to a standstill, and Lord Beaconsfield looked out of his carriage window and made inquiries from the station master, who was standing close to me on the platform, as to the band. The station master explained that it was the circus band, and at once introduced me. 'Dizzy' then remarked that he had often heard of me, and, shaking me by the hand, said he was pleased to make my acquaintance."

Lord George, who is a charming *raconteur*, chatted in this most genial and pleasant way, giving me an account of the many incidents which had occurred in his career. On one occasion he took a building in Clare Market, and fitted it up as a penny "gaff." This building had formerly been a chapel, which had been condemned by the authorities on account of the many persons who had been buried there! After giving up the "presto, fly!" business he started a pantomime; then he had a panorama, which was blown up, severely injuring himself and his wife, and practically destroying the whole of his property.

"But how did you become a circus proprietor?" I asked.

"I began by buying a pony, which I trained to tell fortunes. After a while I obtained a horse, which was trained in a public-house yard to gallop in a circle. Then I instructed a number of boys and girls, and, having engaged several well known equestrian artists, the first

Photograph by *Geo. Newnes, Ltd.*

THE CIRCUS FORGE

performance was given at King's Lynn. We afterwards travelled all over the country, with successful results. In those days I used to charge one penny for admission, but the artists were not then so well paid as they are now. As time went on the business was extended, and I introduced various features, my wife and myself taking prominent parts in the performance."

"If it would not be betraying professional secrets, I should be glad if you would inform me how you train horses, as so many different ideas prevail on the subject."

"Well," remarked Lord George, "the fact is there are different methods adopted for teaching various performances. In some cases nothing but patience and kindness will suffice, while in others the animals have to be 'reminded.' For instance, to make what is known as a 'buck-jumper' is very easily accomplished. As the trainer approaches the animal he places his outstretched arm on its withers, as if afraid of getting too near to the horse, and at the same time pretends to coax it. It is always noticed that while the man is talking to the animal, his hand being against the pommel of the saddle, the horse shakes its head in a threatening way, and then kicks out violently. This is caused by the trainer pricking it with a pin, or some other sharp instrument. You can, by this process of pricking in various parts of the body, make a horse rear or kick in the most vicious manner. To get an animal to lie down is a very simple matter. You strap up one of the forelegs, and then strike the other gently below the knee with a cane, and the horse, to avoid the treatment, will gradually go down on to its knees. When this has been done a few times, and while the horse is on its knees, you pull the bridle towards you, and the animal will lie down. After a course of training, little trouble is experienced in the matter."

Photograph by *Geo. Newnes, Ltd.*

THE LION "ALBERT" AND HIS WIFE.

Naturally, Lord George Sanger has met with numerous exciting adventures, and after he had told me some amusing stories in regard to the advertising dodges which had to be resorted to in order to make the "show" talked about, I asked him to relate the one which caused the greatest consternation.

"I have," he remarked, "had several accidents, for in a big circus, which comprises so many different performances, it is impossible, however careful you may be, to avoid incidents of this kind. In 1876 I was on the continent, and was asked by a theatrical proprietor who was intending to introduce a play in which there was to be a love scene, to allow my trained lions to take part in the performance. The idea was certainly an original one, and it was arranged that the wild beasts should appear when a forest was represented The lions, which arrived the day before the necessary arrangements were completed for the rehearsal, were lowered into one of the cellars under the stage.

The next morning I went to superintend the rehearsal, and was informed that the lions had broken loose from their dens! Nobody would go into the cellars, and I had to descend alone, with a lamp in one hand, and a stick in the other. I searched one of the cellars, and was proceeding to inspect the other when I was knocked down by one of the lions, which rushed past me. I got up, and the light being extinguished, I could see what appeared to be balls of fire in various directions. I re-lit the lamp, and swinging it about began to talk to the animals, with the result that, after a time, they went back to their dens, which I immediately made secure. Our misfortunes, however, were not yet ended, for when the lion scene was to be publicly given, another strange accident occurred. The beasts were being lifted from the cellar, when, owing to the rope not being

placed in the centre, the cage overbalanced, and the lions coming into violent contact with one of the ends, fell out into the cellar! The proprietor of the building was in a dreadful state, declaring that he was ruined, but I reassured him, and after a little delay—the curtain at the time was down—things were ready for the performance. Then came another difficulty. The lion tamer was found to be intoxicated. To make a long story short, I took his place, and carried out the performance successfully."

At this moment one of the gorgeous cars which had just been varnished for the tour in the provinces was being separated from the others in order that it might dry more quickly. One of the workmen thoughtlessly put his hand on a wheel in order to give the car a push! This, as it seemed to me, was enough to annoy anyone, but Lord George merely asked me to excuse him so that he might explain to the workman the absolute necessity of not touching the carriage where it had just been varnished. I had, however, already taken up too much of the great circus proprietor's valuable time, so I wished him "Good day," and thanked him for his courtesy.

Photograph by *Geo. Newnes, Ltd.*

SERVING OUT THE CORN.

A WONDER OF THE WAR.

Corporal J. Anderson, whose regimental number is 5,916, had a terrible experience at Magersfontein—an experience which few men could undergo and survive to tell the tale. Corporal Anderson, who belonged to B Company, was advancing towards the Boer trenches along with his comrades when the terrible musketry fire burst forth from the enemy's position which laid so many gallant fellows in the dust. A Company, the position of which was, of course, at the head of the column, was in the act of opening out in extended order when the deadly fire so unexpectedly flashed from the enemy's trenches, and B Company, being next in order, of course suffered heavily at the very first discharge. In the confusion which ensued, Corporal Anderson got separated from his company, and, finding himself, amongst a scattered section of the Highland Light Infantry, assumed the command. It was while advancing through the deadly hail of bullets, along with this remnant of the Highland Light Infantry, that Corporal Anderson met with the shock from the terrible consequences of which he was afterwards miraculously delivered. A lyddite shell suddenly burst on the left of his section, killing three of the men instantly, and so great was the concussion occasioned by this terrible explosive that Corporal Anderson, although escaping death, was instantly thrown to the ground insensible, and remembered no more until next day, when he recovered consciousness in the field hospital. The shock, however, sustained by the explosion had a fearful effect on the gallant fellow, and when, on regaining his senses, he tried to speak, he could not utter a word, nor could he hear the sound of the voices of those around him. Corporal Anderson had become deaf and dumb. He was, along with the rest of the wounded, conveyed to the hospital at Wynberg. Here he was seen by Sir William MacCormac, the famous physician, who examined him by means of the X rays, afterwards declaring that Corporal Anderson must have had a wonderful constitution or he could not have survived the awful shock. The most remarkable part of the story is yet to come, however. As already stated, Corporal Anderson lost his sense of speech and hearing, and orders were given that he should be invalided home. He was accordingly conveyed to Cape Town and put on board a transport. When about half the voyage had been accomplished, some rough weather was experienced, and one day Corporal Anderson was thrown violently against the side of the vessel. The result of this accident may with some truth be called miraculous. His speech and hearing instantly returned, after having been lost for over six weeks. Corporal Anderson's kilt demonstrates in an unmistakable manner the terrible ordeal through which he passed, and the hotness of the enemy's fire, for it is riddled with bullet-holes. He is now as well as ever, and fit for another "go" at the enemy if called upon.

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"MY BEST FRIEND."

[Below are some extracts from this competition. Owing to exigencies of space, I have been obliged to shorten the essays considerably. The general tone of the essays sent in pleased me very much.—O. F.]

Who is my best friend, do you ask? Why, my mother to be sure, sir! for, as the old saying goes, and there was never a truer one: "A boy's best friend is his mother." The average school-boy may have some very good fellows amongst his companions, and perhaps a really awfully decent chap as his own especial chum, but what boy in his senses would think of putting even his best chum on an equality with his mater in his affections? In my humble opinion, Mr. Fag, a fellow's best friend should be someone in whom he can put the most implicit confidence; someone from whom he need have no secrets, and someone to whom he can turn for help and guidance in all times of trial and difficulty. A "best" friend, and I am here supposing him to be a boy should not be afraid to tell his chum, if he thinks that he is not going on straight, and should do his very utmost, both by his example and persuasion, to set him right again. A "best" friend can never be a flatterer, but should be someone in whom one can take a just pride, and from whose friendship one may reap a lasting benefit. He, or she, need not of necessity be popular; but, if their friendship is worth having, they are sure to be respected.

Naturally one's best friend is that one person for whom one feels the greatest affection, even amounting to reverence, and it is this feeling that makes me stick up for my mother as being "My Best Friend."

Owen Chitty.

My best friend is a manly fellow. Delighting in truthfulness—which of necessity combines with it honesty—upright, open as the day; full of that vigorous personality and strong character which naturally draws to it a mind weaker than its own; a fine sportsman; yet withal, of so sympathetic a nature that he cannot fail to attract, to strengthen, and to encourage whom he befriends.

One particular trait to be admired is his gentlemanliness.

This trait he carries with him always. His uprightness demands that he should not have one class of manners at home and a different sort in the society in which he moves; always respectful to the aged; sympathetic where sympathy is needed; jolly and free where others treat him openly, yet showing none of that repellant contempt bred by familiarity.

Percy W. Holton.

Being a girl, of course, my *best* friend is a girl, although I have some very excellent friends of the other sex, too. She is above all things *true to me*. Whatever people might say against me, she would stick to me, and fight my battles as her own; whatever she might hear, she would believe in me, and would never, if she could help it, allow me to be slightingly spoken of in her presence. My chum is *proud of me*. If I am successful in anything, I know that she is quite if not more pleased than I am. She congratulates me with true heartiness, and is never tired of telling and showing people what a truly marvellous and clever girl *her* friend is. My chum and I are *never jealous of each other*. She is very pretty, and I——well I am rather pretty, too! but we never feel that one is cutting out the other. If she is appreciated, *I* feel somehow a reflected glory, and I know that she feels quite annoyed if everyone does not admire my particular style! My chum and I *never gush* over each other. Some girls are always kissing, but neither my chum nor I care about that sort of thing. We *know* that we care for each other, and that is enough.

And now, alas! the girl who has been my best friend ever since I went—a friendless mite—to boarding school, is going to be married. Will she be to me as she has ever been? Well, time will show.

Nora K. Browne.

My best friend has been christened "Froggy" by you English boys—just as I have been one year before. We don't mind, you know, as long as the chaps are as nice as those who were at our school!

One reason that we are good friends is—that we both have a big nose (many Frenchmen have one), and they can smell very well, that's why they say in French: "*Je ne sais pas le sentir.*" I never knew a boy as kind as "Froggy." We are inseparable, never *l'un sans l'autre!* On Sundays (Belgian boys' only holiday) we go together, arm-in-arm, to the flower market, where we quarrel because each wants to pay the flower merchant and won't let the other pay.

The following are some of the qualities I think a good friend should have:—

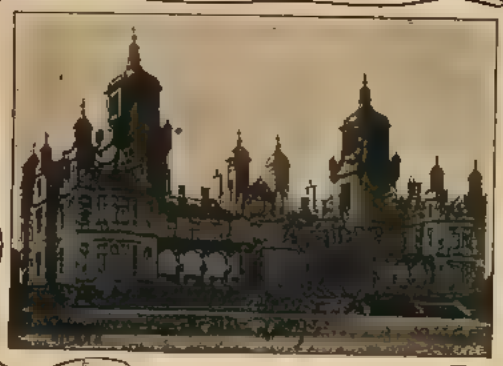
In case his friend falls in a river, be ready to jump after him. (If he can swim: I am not an anarchist!) Always be ready to lend him money; never ask it back again. Help him in his school or other work. Never say a word which would make him sad.

In case he is a lazy boy (like myself, until I read about English boys in The Captain), make him understand that he should work. In short, (for I'm getting near to four hundred words) try to give him all the qualities he has himself, and even those which . . . he has not.

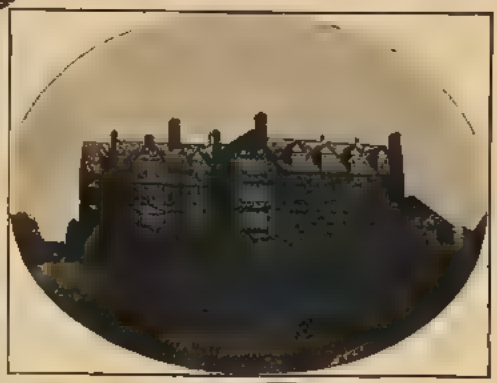
Achilles van Swae.

Antwerp.

Some English Schools



Daniel Stewart's College

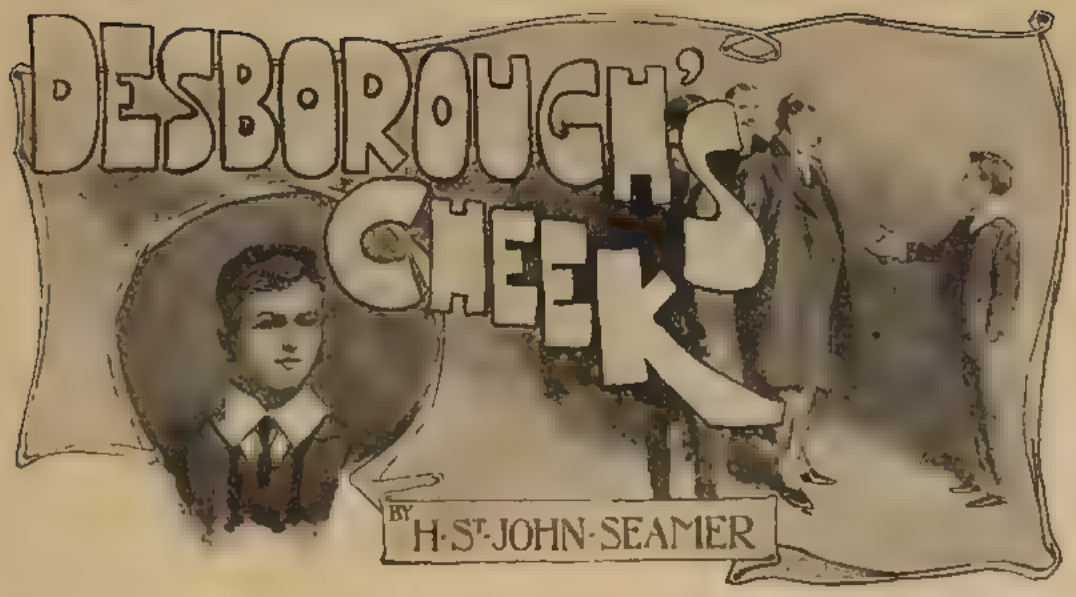


School Hall, Bury St Edmunds

Kesgrave Hall, Ipswich

Denstone College

Congregational School, Caterham



Illustrated by T. M. R. Whitwell.

I HAVE told you what an awful cheeky beggar Desborough is. He doesn't seem to care for anything or anybody. And the funny part is that it never gets him into trouble. He says and does all manner of cheeky things, that, if we did them, would land us in the Little Room in less than no time. But he seems to be able to do what he likes—very nearly—and is never a bit the worse for it.

Why, on the very first day that he came to the school—I had been there two terms and had just got my remove into the Second—he wasn't in the least frightened or nervous, as a new boy ought to be. In the playground, when we were waiting for the bell to ring, he just tried to chum up with us elder boys, as if he had known us for years. Of course we didn't like it, and tried to snub him. But that didn't have any effect, for he wouldn't be snubbed.

So at last Deeks said, "Look here, you fellows, we must take it out of this Desborough somehow." And we all agreed that we'd have to. "I've thought of a plan," he said. "He won't try on any of his cheek after that, I know."

So he went up to Desborough, and pretended to be very friendly with him, while we all stood by, looking on.

"You're a new boy, aren't you?" said Deeks.

"Yes, rather," said Desborough. "This is my first morning here, and I think it's an awfully jolly school."

"So it is," said Deeks, "and you'll think it much jollier after you've been here a little longer."

"I think I shall," answered Desborough, as cheekily as possible. "I like the fellows, and the Doctor seems an awfully nice man."

"Oh, you know the Doctor already, do you?" said Deeks.

"Yes. My father took me to call on him about a week ago."

"Ah, you want to see him in private to know how nice he can be," said Deeks, winking at us. "By the way, have you shaken hands with the other masters yet?"

"No," replied Desborough. "What do you mean?"

"Dear me!" said Deeks. "You ought to have done that directly you came. It's a custom at this school. Every new boy is supposed to go and shake hands with the masters as soon as he comes—so as to make their acquaintance, you know."

You'd have thought that Desborough would have seen that Deeks was rotting him, wouldn't you? But he didn't.

"Thank you for telling me," he said. "I shouldn't like to look as if I didn't know what was right. Shall I go and do it now?"

"No, no!" said Deeks, hastily. "You had

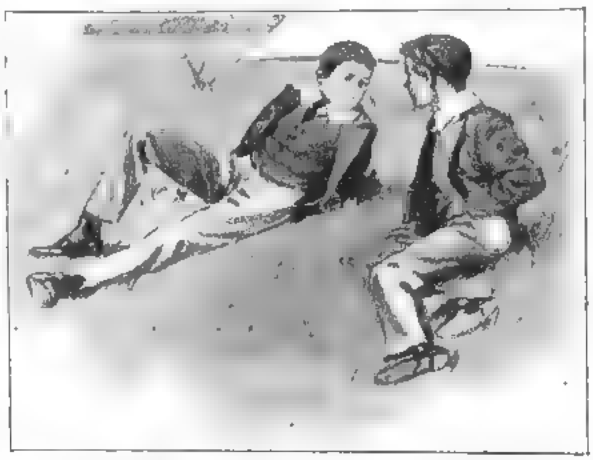
Google

better wait now until the bell rings and we go into the Big Room for prayers. Then I'll show you the masters—they'll all be standing together at the top of the room by the Doctor's desk—and you can go up to them, and shake hands all round, and tell them who you are. Of course, most of the other new boys will have done it already."

"All right," said Desborough, sucking it in beautifully. "Thank you for telling me. I should never have known otherwise."

So we kept him talking until the bell rang—it always rings late on the first day of term—and then we all went into the Big Room together.

"Sit by me," said Deeks, for on the first day the new boys' places for prayers are not assigned yet, and they sit anyhow, mixed up with the First and Second Forms. "Now's your time," he went on, when everybody was settled, and the reader was going to begin. "You must shake hands with the senior master first—that's him with the red moustache. Go on."



"I SAY," HE SAID AT LAST, "STAND US AN ORANGE, WILL YOU?"

He gave Desborough a little push, and the silly duffer marched up to the top of the room as bold as brass, while we sat grinning and wondering what would happen to him; although we thought it rather too bad of Deeks to send him to old Wolff, who, as everybody knows, is an awful brute.

However, nothing happened, as we expected and hoped it would do. He walked up to old Wolff and put out his hand. But Wolff stuck his behind his back, and said: "Eh, small boy? and what do you want?" in the quick way he always has.

Desborough said in a squeaky voice that he was Desborough, and that he had come to shake hands with the masters.

We thought then that Wolff would nearly eat him up alive, and no salt, and held our breaths. But he didn't. He only smiled, and said "Eh? Want to shake hands with the masters, eh? Very well then," and actually shook hands with him.

And then the gong sounded for prayers to begin, and Wolff said: "Stand here until prayers are over."

You can imagine how we felt, when we had intended that his cheek should have a good taking down.

But that isn't the story I was going to tell. In fact, it is almost the opposite, though it will show you what a cheeky young beggar Desborough was when he first came. He got better afterwards, and soon learnt that it didn't pay to be cheeky to us, but only to the masters, and not always to them, so that he became quite a decent sort of fellow. Besides, he generally had plenty of pocket money, and didn't mind standing tarts or ginger-beer on half-holidays or when the tuck-man came down to the school, so that I was very chummy with him, though we don't speak to one another now.

One afternoon we were playing the Old Boys at cricket, and that is always a big match. The boys have their mothers and fathers and sisters there to see it, and the Old Boys do the same. And the head master has a great tent pitched on his lawn, and gives everybody tea, and bread and butter, and jam, and buns and things.

I was lying all by myself, watching the match, because I had nothing else to do, for my people lived too far away to come and see me, as the other fellows' people did, and was rather envying them walking about with their mothers and fathers, and going into the tent and having a tuck-in—you see I couldn't go because I had no one to take in with me—when Desborough came up.

"Hullo!" I said. "What are you doing all alone?"

"And where are your people?" he answered back.

"Oh, my people haven't arrived yet," I replied, without looking at him. I didn't want him to know that they weren't coming at all.

"Neither have mine," he said, throwing himself on the grass beside me. I didn't believe him, because I thought that he said that they hadn't come yet for the same reason that I did.

We neither of us spoke for some time, but sat watching the match, and nibbling stalks of grass.

PRESENTLY HE WALKED UP TO THE SIDE OF THE CARRIAGE, AND I SAW HIM TAKE HIS HAT OFF, AND SAY SOMETHING.

"I say," he said at last, "stand us an orange, will you?"

Now I had only sixpence left out of my week's allowance, and it was a long time to Saturday. As I have already told you, he generally had lots of pocket money, and I never knew him to ask to be stood anything before. I hardly knew how to answer him, but I didn't want to stand him an orange just then.

"What?" I said; "haven't you any coin?"

"No," he said. "I expected to get a tip this afternoon, so I spent all I had yesterday."

"I don't know that I can stand you anything," I said, for I didn't believe in this tip that he expected. "In fact, I was going to ask you."

"Haven't you any money either?" he asked.

"No," I replied; "at least, I've only got sixpence left, and that has to last me until Saturday."

"Never mind," he said; "let's go halves. I'll make it all right when I get some myself."

"I don't see how I can."

"I did stand you a tart on Monday."

It was just like him to try and make me feel mean by reminding me of the favours that I had received from him, and I didn't like it. Besides, nobody is obliged to stand another fellow anything.

"I can't," I said. And then, to change the subject, I drew his attention to a carriage and pair that was driving in at the gates. The coachman and footman were in livery, and wore cockades. The gentleman looked like a soldier, and the lady sitting beside him was beautifully dressed.

"I wonder who they are," I said.

But Desborough would not be turned away from what he was talking about.

"I must get some money somehow," he said. "I wonder if the man in that carriage would give me some. He looks jolly well off."

"You'd better ask him," said I, rather nettled.

"I've half a mind to."

"I'll bet you don't."

"I'll bet you a shilling I do."

"I haven't got a shilling, but I'll bet you sixpence that you don't get anything out of him." On second thoughts I felt sure that he wouldn't mind a bit asking the man, if he were dared to it. He was cheeky enough for anything.

"Right you are," said Desborough, repeating

the terms of the bet. "I bet you an even sixpence that I go and ask that man in the carriage for a tip, and that I get one. There!"

"But you haven't any money to pay with if you lose," I said. The sixpence was as good as mine. He was bound to lose, the duffer!

"I'll pay you on Saturday, or before if I can."

"Done!" I cried. "Shake hands!"

So we shook hands on the bargain, for, of course, if we hadn't it wouldn't have been a fair bet, and he might have backed out of it. I hardly expected him to shake hands.

By this time the carriage had stopped, and he went off towards it at once. He didn't go straight up to it, but dodged round to one side, and I began to think that he was funking. But presently he walked up to the side of the carriage, and I saw him take his hat off, and say something. Then the man said something, and Desborough took his hat off again, and the lady smiled and bowed and shook hands with him, and evidently asked him to get into the carriage, for he stepped in and sat down with his back to the horses, so that he had, no doubt, performed half his bet, or would do shortly. All the same, it is one thing to get to talk to strangers and another to get tips out of them. Afterwards they all three got out and went into the tent on the lawn to have a tuck-in, and I didn't see any more of them.

When the match was over, and the people had gone away, I happened to meet Simpson *tertius*, and so I told him all about my bet with Desborough, and how I thought I had won an easy sixpence off him. While I was talking and waiting for the tea bell—we always have tea late on match afternoons—Desborough himself came up with an awful grin on his face.

"I've been looking for you," he said to me. "Hand over your sixpence."

"What for?" said I, laughing.

"Why, I've won, of course."

"Rubbish!" said I.

"Well, here's the money,' he said, showing me half-a-sovereign. "I had an awful job to get it. He thought five shillings would be enough at first."

I still couldn't believe him, and told him so. Then he got quite waxy, and appealed to Simpson. And Simpson backed him up, and the end of it was that I had to give him my sixpence.

When he had gone, Simpson said to me: "By the way, what were the people like that Desborough went up and spoke to?"

So I told him, and he burst out laughing.

"What's the matter?" I asked.

"Well, you must be green!" he said, and went on laughing like anything.

"What do you mean, you silly duffer?" I asked again, for it ragged me to see him laughing like that.

"Why, they were his uncle and his new aunt!" replied Simpson. "He's done you nicely brown."

"How do you know?"

"I heard him calling them uncle and aunt in the tent. And my people were talking about them, and saying that Colonel Desborough had just married the lady; so I know it is true."

And I found out for certain afterwards that it was right. It was all a frightful swindle.

So we don't speak to one another now, and I have cut Simpson *tertius* for backing Desborough up. I should have liked to have told the Doctor about it, only we aren't allowed to bet, and I should have got into trouble as well. All the same, I wished I hadn't been quite so hasty when I saw Desborough standing tarts and things to all his friends.

I WISHED I HADN'T BEEN QUITE SO HASTY WHEN I SAW DESBOROUGH STANDING TARTS AND THINGS TO ALL HIS FRIENDS.

SOME HINTS ON NET-PRACTICE.

By C. B. Fry.

With net-practice regarded as a means of obtaining as much fun and exercise as possible in a limited amount of time we are not concerned here. There is nothing to be said against that kind of net-practice; any person who has ever tried it knows that, given half an-hour's leisure, a good wicket, two decent medium-pace bowlers, and three small boys to field, there is nothing more desirable of its sort than a rattling good knock at the nets.

We, however, are looking at net practice rather as a means of learning the arts of batting, bowling, and fielding—the two former chiefly: in fact, we are going to the nets to improve our cricket; we may find fun and exercise at the same time, but that is a secondary consideration.

In reference to this, it is worth while noticing that there is a vast difference between a boy whose cricket, in style, character, and every respect, is unformed and unsettled, and an older player, whose methods of making the various strokes have become fixed by habit, and whose style is second nature to him. Arthur Shrewsbury might go to a net and slog about in a reckless fashion without doing his cricket any harm whatever; directly he went in again in a match he would have at his immediate command the same accurate and scientific method of play that has been his for years, and which, by the way, it took years to acquire. But, Tom Brown, *aetat* sixteen, a promising school batsman, has not this fixed and stereotyped style to rely upon, and if he goes to the nets and indulges in slogging of a reckless and careless description, he will inevitably contract faults of style which will solidify into bad habits, and will for a certainty spoil his cricket.

When you are a master of an art, such as batting, you can perhaps afford to play tricks and take liberties—at least you can do so with some degree of impunity. But while you are an apprentice hand—a tyro, as the books say—you can do nothing of the kind.

You have no doubt read or heard advice to the effect that you ought to play in practice exactly as you would in a match. With this I do not altogether agree. You ought rather, I think, to regard practice as the occasion to learn, and a match as the occasion to use what you have learnt. This does not mean that you do not also learn in matches, but rather that you should at the nets give your mind to acquiring good methods and execution, while in a match you should give your mind entirely to playing each ball as well as you can on its merits. At the nets, you should study and practice how to play: in matches, you should play without thinking much about how you are making this or that stroke. In a match, you should be able to give the whole of your attention to the bowling you are playing, trusting to having acquired good methods in your practice.

The difficulty, of course, is to acquire these good methods; and this is your task at the nets.

You must first of all realise that it is one thing to be able to play a stroke correctly and another to be able to fetch out the right stroke for each ball that is bowled you. It is not much use playing forward to perfection at a slow leg-break which is just the length you ought to play back.

Nevertheless, the first point naturally is to learn how to make the principal strokes correctly. When you are proficient at these you can turn your attention to the problem of which stroke you ought to play at this or that ball.

The chief strokes are the back stroke, the forward stroke, the drive, and the cut. The correct methods of making these I tried to describe in back numbers of The Captain in several articles on "How to Bat, and How Not to Bat." I also tried to explain what strokes you should play at various kinds of balls. All this I cannot repeat now. I advise you to look the back numbers up, for, of course, you have them.

Now, it makes a great difference whether or not you have a good coach to instruct you, and a good bowler to bowl at you. If you have, your task is easier, as the coach will criticise and correct your play; while the bowler will send down exactly the ball required for the particular stroke you are engaged upon.

If you have not, you should proceed as follows.

You ought not, in my opinion, to practice at the nets more than once a day, and that for a period not exceeding half-an-hour. You need two bowlers, no more; and you will, of course, get hold of the best available. Make up your mind to devote the first half of each practice time to learning one stroke, and one only; the second half you should play as in a game, each ball as you think fit.

But in order to carry out the first part of the

programme you must get your bowlers to send down consecutively a considerable number of balls "to order"—balls to suit the stroke you are engaged on. They will not be able to do this for certain each time; but if you can get them really to try, you will receive a good number of balls such as you require. Stick to your work, paying great attention to where you put your feet (*vide* back numbers) and to how you hold your body. Try each time to play the stroke better than the last.

By this means you will one day improve in one stroke and the next day in another, and you will very soon find out which are the balls that suit this or that stroke. If you are practising the forward stroke you will find that a certain number of the balls bowled you are easily played forward; a certain number only with difficulty. Note which is which, and use your knowledge thus acquired when you are subsequently playing on more general lines, whether at the nets or in a game. Remember, you should practice driving and hitting just as much as playing forward and back. But never fall into the common mistake of regarding the forward stroke as the only one to be learnt. It is a very valuable stroke; but its value is much diminished if it is the only one you have. You see, if the first ball you receive is one that can only be played back and you try to play it forward and get bowled, your mastery of forward play is not much use to you for the rest of the afternoon. All the same, the forward stroke is in some ways the most difficult of all to master; so you will likely enough have to spend more time on it than on any other. Remember, however, W. G.'s words to the effect that the foundation of the art of batting consists in being able to play *both* forward *and* back; and, may I add, of knowing when to do so? It is a case, not of the one or the other, but of both.

You will observe that you must at the outset start with a clear idea of what you have to learn in each case. You must discover this either by watching a good player—the easiest way—or by instruction from a good coach—the next easiest way—or from reading it up in a book—the most difficult, but in some ways the best way. Unless you know how you ought to play a stroke, you are somewhat handicapped in your efforts to acquire a mastery of it, as a moment's reflection will convince you.

With regard to bowling, boys as a rule do themselves much more harm than good at the nets. The usual thing is for six or seven boys to stand in a *queue* and each in turn rush up to the wicket and fire down any sort of ball. This is no use as bowling practice, and is very bad for the batsman.

There should never be more than three bowlers at a net at a time—two is a better number. They should bowl carefully.

In learning to bowl, the chief point is to acquire accuracy of length, and this should always be kept in view. Accuracy of length does not come as much from mere mechanical precision as from an acquired power of pitching the ball where you want to. That is what you should aim at. And it is excellent practice to bowl to a batsman who requires a particular ball sent down each time, for this gives you a definite task.

Boys certainly ought not to bowl too much at nets. On the whole, I think a quarter of an hour is long enough, and it is expedient to allow at least as long between each delivery as is the case in a maiden over in a match.

Fielding practice at nets is most difficult to arrange satisfactorily. If a batch of boys are told off to field, they certainly will not field unless there is someone to keep them up to the mark. Still, it is better to attempt something of the sort than not. I should be glad to hear of any satisfactory system. Much may be done with fielding practice in games, but that is another matter.

C. B. Fry.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

J. S. P.—Score each over thus, putting a dot for each ball, unless runs are made off it, or a wicket obtained by it: ·̇ ·̇ Do not enter wides or no-balls in the over, ·̇ ·̇ but in the column allotted to them. Score byes and leg-byes against extras in the batting sheet; enter the balls off which they occur in the bowling analysis in dots. Bowling averages, whether for a match or a season, are obtained by dividing the number of runs scored off a bowler by the number of wickets obtained by him.

Quex.—You must cultivate a regular run and a regular delivery and a standard ball—say a medium or fast-medium with an off-break. Make yourself complete master of this. Then introduce variations of pace and break without altering run-up or delivery. It is the slight variation unperceived that baffles a batsman, not the obvious and complete change of ball.

Alex Ranes (Way College, Adelaide) recently achieved a magnificent performance in Australian inter-school cricket. Playing on the Adelaide Oval, for Way College *v.* Christian Brothers College, Ranes scored 114 not out in first innings, and 101 not out in the second. Of course, I do not know what the Christian Brothers' bowling was like, but I presume it was up to public school form; in which case Alex. Ranes

certainly made a record. I shall always be glad to receive notification of big scores and good bowling performances from my Antipodean readers. A batsman is out l.b.w. if he interposes any part whatever of his body, except hand holding bat.

X. Y. Z.—The boy in question probably over-trained last year. Training consists in a gradual building-up, not in a systematic process of exhaustion. This year he should train slowly. He should take plenty of long, brisk walks; no exercise is safer or more bracing to the muscles. He certainly ought not to run the full distance more than once a fortnight. He should not run more than three times a week. He should run a mile one day, two miles another, on the road; occasionally he might do an easy cross-country run.

W. H. (KIRKCALDY).—Your trade does you no harm if you take regular exercise. It matters little what you wear in practice; but perhaps you ought occasionally to run just as you will in a race. You will see some hints on sprinting above. "Athletics," in the All-England Series, is a useful little book. Never mind your knees. Are you sure sprinting is your *forte* rather than longer distances?

Mij.—Messrs. Newnes, the publishers, supply a cover, I think. Get the cover and have the binding done locally.

O. H. (POWYHE).—I think girls can play cricket very well indeed when they once grasp the elementary facts and principles of the game. Have you read "King Willow," by J. C. Snaith? No room here for hints, I fear. I do not know about August 2nd yet. If there, I shall be glad to give you a short lesson. I have not seen the riddle. Write again about hints.

A. C. H. (PERTH, W.A.)—Cultivate a regular run-up and delivery, and keep the arm high. Work diligently till you can bowl accurately, with the length and direction you want. Then cultivate a power of varying your pace and break slightly, without betraying the change to the batsman. A breaking ball should be played either right back or hit; in the former case watch it from the pitch on to your bat; in the latter get as near to smothering the break at the pitch as you can.

L. A. H (MELBOURNE).—I expect you will find an article on bowling in THE CAPTAIN in the course of the spring. Never play forward at a leg-break. Most leg-breaks are slow, so it pays in general to play them right back, or else run out and catch them on the full pitch. It is difficult to hit them as they pitch. Let the ball get well into the air before you decide on your stroke.

B. G. B.—I do not know of a club. If you cannot find one, get up a boys' club yourself. There are plenty of boys about. I am glad you are keen.

Circulation.—You are all right. Do not do too much gymnastics; but do not give them up. You should go in for walking exercise, and eat plenty of plain, wholesome food. You will outgrow your troubles. Be careful to avoid chills after exercise. I dare say you need a tonic.

C. C. V. R. S.—Write to J. J. Reid, the Pavilion, Kennington Oval, S.E. Tell him what you want, and mention my name.

W. J. (NOTTS.).—You are well proportioned and, I expect, strong. Do not use dumb-bells weighing more than 1lb. each. You cannot do better than train as I suggested in the article you mention. You will see some more advice above.

W. H. G.—Pound dumb-bells would, I think, suit you, but you might use even half-pounders. I do not believe in heavy bells; they make one slow. Quality of muscle depends on quickness as well as sheer power.

"Buenos Ayres."—Throwing is, in my opinion, a matter of the elbow and nothing else. If the elbow is straight, or even stiff, though bent all through the action, a bowler cannot throw, no matter what he does with his wrist or shoulder. The bowler you describe is quite fair in my opinion. I agree about the rule.

Hercules.—Very good indeed, especially for your age. You write nicely.

G. F. Thackray.—The referee was within his rights. He ought, in my opinion, to have removed the linesman as well. The player should have kept his temper—at least, till the game was over.

Paddy.—Glad to hear from you. As to sprinting, begin by practising sharp, short spurts. You will find some hints above. As to your enemies in the school, you can now afford to despise them. You might tell them that, even if England is wrong, which she is not, you are bound to stick to her. As to the extra-mural foes, copy General French's nobility.

Mask.—Bat should weigh about 2lbs. 1oz.; cost from 16s. 0d. to 18s. 0d., according to shop.

G. J. G.—Rather difficult, is it not, to find a suitable hobby for some one you do not know? If I were you I should go in hard for games.

H. A. L.—I do not quite know what the exercises with the developer are. But I think you should reduce the work proportionately all through, *i.e.*, do every exercise, but only, say, ten motions thereof instead of twenty. There is no reason why you should not do the exercises any time of day, save immediately after a meal.

B. T. (SHEFFIELD).—Nothing for it but plenty of out-door exercise.

G. Robinson.—Jones is not a tall man, about 5ft. 10ins., I fancy. Height is an advantage, but not an essential. It is a great mistake to take to fast bowling unless it comes natural to you. You might use light dumb-bells (1lb. each) and follow Sandow's system. I do not believe in any special training for cricket.

E. Rees.—You are quite right. The penalty rule does not work out fairly when a certain goal has been saved by an infringement of the rules.

H. M.—Use light dumb-bells (1lb. each) Follow a regular system, Sandow's for example. The pay of professionals varies considerably. In county elevens they get £5 a match, as a rule. But they also receive a fixed salary for ground work.

C. B. F.

THE THREE SCOUTS

by Fred Whishaw

Illustrated by George Soper.

SYNOPSIS.—(CHAPTERS I.—IV.)

At the outbreak of the Boer War, three young men, Geoff and Bernard (generally known as "Bunny") Bigby, and Guy Bunsen, formerly school-fellows together in England, find themselves obliged to leave Johannesburg. However, Bunsen shams ill, and remains behind. Geoff and Bunny, after an exciting journey, arrive, with their mother, at Maritzburg. Leaving Mrs. Bigby here, they go to the front on their own account as scouts. Coming into contact with the Boers, Geoff escapes but Bunny is captured.

CHAPTER V.

PRESENTLY Geoff roused himself with a start; in his grief to have lost his brother, he had forgotten his own prisoner. Geoff ran down the side of the kopje, but the fellow had disappeared—it was only natural that he should have done so.

But the greater calamity dominated the lesser, and Geoff, frantic with grief, set out for Ladysmith with scarcely a thought for the escape of his man, almost numbed with the magnitude of the calamity that had befallen Bunny. He scarcely knew how to break the news to his mother. How would she take it? For Mrs. Bigby adored her youngest son; the brothers were accustomed, laughingly, to call Bunny "Little Benjamin, her ruler," and the news of his capture would be a terrible blow to her. But Mrs. Bigby was a brave and good woman, and, seeing the distress of her son, she received the news with wonderful composure and fortitude, taking care not to add to Geoff's grief by any sign of anxiety on Bunny's behalf. Geoff told the whole story from beginning to end, and found his mother smiling at the end of it.

"Aren't you angry with me, mother?" he asked. "He might, one feels, have been saved, somehow; I ought to have kept a better lookout upon him."

"How could you?" Mrs. Bigby smiled. "You did your best, but your hands were occupied with your own struggle. Angry with you? A thousand times no, my son! On the contrary, I see very plainly that you could have done no more than you did, and with all my heart I thank you for saving at least one of my sons to me."

"I wish to Heaven it had been the other one I had saved!" sighed Geoff, relieved, nevertheless, by his mother's attitude, "and that I had got myself carried away instead of old Bunny! However, cheer up, mother, for I have vowed not to rest until I have got him back, and I mean to keep my word! How shall you take it if we end by both being caught and imprisoned?"

Mrs. Bigby was silent for a minute or two.

"Even if you were, I think you would be better so—safer, I mean—sitting in prison together, than to be constantly making yourselves a mark for the enemy's bullets as you have been doing up to this time in your dangerous scouting work. That is my point of view—the mother's," laughed Mrs. Bigby. "Of course, I don't expect you to see the matter in the same light; but if you were captives together, you could at least help one another to escape! Talk it over with Hugh, my son, when he comes," Mrs. Bigby ended, "and anything that you two may think best, I shall also think the best."

So Geoff went down to Durban to meet Hugh, just arriving from Sydney. As the brothers clasped hands on the quay, Geoff told Hugh of the calamity which had befallen poor Bunny. Hugh looked grave.

"They won't shoot him, will they?" he asked.

"God forbid! They wouldn't dare! They've got to think of their own prisoners in our hands; we have a good many already."

"Where'll he be, then—near where they got him, or up at Pretoria?"

"That's what I should like to find out, and what I mean you and I *shall* find out. When we know where he is, we'll go and fetch him back, if you're game."

"That'd be a silly trick, surely," said Hugh; "for instead of one prisoner, there'd be three. We'll get him back when we march into Pretoria, but not a day before. Who put that mad idea into your head!"

"But I don't see that it *is* mad. Can't you conceive any possible way of rescuing a fellow supposing you know where he's confined?"

"Well, I don't! I daresay I'm not so sanguine by nature as you are, but I don't, and there's an end. Imagine me, not speaking a word of the language, deliberately going into the enemy's country to rescue a prisoner from one of their gaols. It would be madness."

"It would be difficult, of course; but I don't think it either mad or hopeless; nor does mother. We wouldn't go as combatants, in the uniform of such and-such regiments, but as private individuals."

"Then we'd be shot as spies, man, or crammed into a prison. *You* might pass as a Boer pedlar, or farmer, or anything you like, since you know the language; but I am hopelessly English, and should be suspected at once."

"Quite true," sighed Geoff. "It would be a horrible risk for you, and I oughtn't to have suggested your going. I feel, though, that I must go and scout about for poor Bunn: it is sort of my fault that he was taken, you see; will you forgive me if I go away for a bit and leave you? I should join your corps, whatever you may enlist in, later on."

"No, Geoff, don't be an old fool," said Hugh kindly. "The enterprise is too rash and dangerous, it couldn't be carried out with any prospect of success; you must drop the idea. We'll enlist in this Imperial Light Horse they're talking about, or, if you're bent on scouting, we'll scout; but to undertake to besiege Pretoria on our own hook, with no artillery but our wits, would be a foolish enterprise; believe me, it would. I daresay I am as anxious to help Bunny as you are."

"Well, you didn't lose him, you see; he was under my care."

"Bosh! You did all you could, you devised a capital plan of escape and carried out your share, while Bunny failed, having a stronger man and a more timid horse to deal with, probably."

Geoff sighed. "At any rate, I'm going to try," he said. "I have vowed to do this, and do it I shall. You'd better not come, I quite see that would be foolish; but help me, if you can, by thinking of the best way for me to set about it."

Hugh promised this much, but he did not look with favour upon the idea of an attempt to find and release Bunny; therefore, he did not encourage Geoff's day-dream, as he considered it, by discussing the matter. But something happened a day or two later to make him think more favourably of Geoff's project. Someone showed him a Boer newspaper—the *Stuats Courant*—in which was published a list of English prisoners already captured. The disaster at Nicholson's Nek had just occurred, and besides the long list of the poor fellows forced to surrender on that unfortunate day, there was published a shorter one of "casual prisoners," and among these latter, mentioned as taken to Pretoria and there imprisoned, Hugh read with mixed feelings the name of "Bernard Bigby, non-combatant, supposed farmer, captured after resistance in a farmhouse within the Boer lines."

He was safe, then—thank God for that!

That evening, as the brothers sat and chatted with their mother, Geoff suddenly leapt out of his chair as though attacked by a spasm of pain. "Great Scott!" he exclaimed, ridiculously loud, "I've got it! The thing—the dodge—*the* very plan!" continued Geoff, almost dancing round the room in his excitement. "I see as plainly as if it were all written in a book, how it can be done. Good Heavens! how is it I never thought of it before? Bunny can be fetched away without danger, and almost without difficulty."

"Nonsense, old man, you're raving," said Hugh. "I'm sorry you're on that tack again."

"No. Listen before you judge, and listen well, because I tell you candidly that I intend to work

this business through, even if you oppose it. I shall get someone else to help me if you won't!" Geoff walked up and down the room for a moment or two, too excited to speak, and perhaps too angry, for he felt that he was upon a hot scent, and did not like to be checked.

Hugh looked on in surprise, for the brothers had always been such good friends that it was something unheard of that Geoff should suggest such a thing as acting in this matter for himself, even though it were in opposition to the opinions of the rest of the family.

"Yes, old man, I know that," Hugh laughed, good-naturedly. "Now let's hear how it's to be done."

CHAPTER VI.

GEOFF'S SCHEME.

"WELL, it's like this," said Geoff, brightening up. "Mother'll tell you that I can take off a Boer farmer, as I do sometimes for fun, to the life."

"He certainly can do that," said Mrs. Bigby,

GEOFF WENT DOWN TO DURBAN TO MEET HUGH.

"You may be sure I shall advise you as I honestly think," said Hugh, presently. "But I am not going to counsel anything outrageously risky. If you've thought of a plan for rescuing Bunny, let's hear it, and mother and I will give our opinions."

Geoff paced about for a while longer.

"I am sorry I said that. At least, said it *like* that," he said, presently, "but I stick to it that I do intend to work the thing, and I hope I shall persuade you to work it with me. Of course, I'd rather have you than anyone else, you know that."

laughing. "You should see him act Oom Paul, Hugh. I assure you, one can scarcely sit in one's chair for laughing; but he's just as good in the part of a young farmer coming into market."

"That'll do, mother," laughed Geoff, "it's my innings, remember. Well, my idea is this: we get through the Boer lines first of all—that won't be difficult, though it is one of the *most* difficult parts in the enterprise, so that the rest, you'll say, must be easy enough, and so it is. You, I should explain, would figure as a trooper of irregular cavalry, or any other regiment engaged at Ladysmith, while I should be got up as a Boer. I

am armed, you are not. I am mounted, you are on foot."

"What fun for me," laughed Hugh. "Go on!"

"In a word, you are my prisoner. You are one of the fellows that came to grief at Nicholson's Nek, you see, only you lost yourself for a couple of days, and wandered into the Boer lines. Well, I have an order from the field cornet to deliver you to the cornet in charge at Pretoria prison. Now d'you see the drift?"

"Good Heavens!" ejaculated Hugh. "Wait a minute—you take away my breath. So that you are supposed to be escorting me, an English prisoner, to Pretoria? Yes, I understand so far. Go on!"

"Capital! Very well, then; at Pretoria, I give you over to the field cornet in charge, and you are duly shut up——"

"Great Scott! man, this is a ripping game for me, I must say!" roared Hugh. "It will be very nice for Bunny having me for a companion, but even the pleasure of Bunny's society will scarcely compensate me for the loss of my liberty."

"You won't lose it for long, old chap. With you two fellows inside and me outside, why, hang it! surely we'll contrive a way out between us."

"Well, we might, of course, and we might get knocked on the head trying it. What do you think, mother? Is there anything in Geoff's plan, besides ingenuity? I quite admit it has plenty of that."

"It is a bold and clever scheme," said Mrs. Bigby, "and worthy of my Geoff, but, of course, there would be danger in the enterprise, from beginning to end of it, and the getting out of Pretoria would be so much more perilous than the getting in—you must not forget that, Geoff."

"There's one thing I had forgotten," said Hugh. "A prisoner going in as I should could take tools with him to help himself out again——"

"Good! so you could; you are coming round to my idea, Hugh, I can see you are—mother, you must too—oh, we'd be so careful, wouldn't we, Hugh? Buck up, old man, and persuade mother to think well of the plan."

Geoff was jubilant and happy: he believed in his plan, and thought he saw Hugh coming round to it. His brother laughed.

"Steady, Geoff," he said, "you are going too fast. This is a thing that can't be decided upon either one way or the other in a hurry. It *is* a good plan, mind you; I grant that to start with, but I should ask to consult one or two with older heads than our own. There's no *very* pressing hurry—let's sleep over it, at any rate."

"Very well," said Geoff "do! The longer you think over the scheme, the better you'll like it. Think of the fun we should have! And think of the useful information we might bring back to the generals about new fortifications at Pretoria, and so on."

"Oh, yes, there's all that in its favour, of course," said Hugh, smiling, "but let's chew the cud a bit."

Later on, at the Outlanders' Club, Geoff spoke of his scheme to one or two of his friends there. Opinions were about equally divided.

Arguments *pro* and *con* were still passing backwards and forwards when there entered a figure well known to many of those present. This was Mr. Nicholas Rosenthal, a millionaire from Johannesburg.

"Your plan will interest old Rosenthal," someone whispered to Geoff, "for, as you know, his son was at the front, and was carried off to Pretoria only a couple of days ago, after that infernal Nicholson's Nek business."

"What's all the discussion about?" asked Mr. Rosenthal, puffing up to the corner in which the younger men were assembled. "This infernal war, I suppose, as usual. Well, it'll kill some of us, boys, and ruin the rest. It's going to last three years, see if it don't. And my poor lad a prisoner in Pretoria, dying of nothing to do and nothing to eat."

"Bigby here has a brother a prisoner there, too, and he's talking of going there and bringing him back," said someone.

"Bringing him back! How's he going to do that? He'll get there quickly enough, if he wants to, but I wouldn't bet on his coming back, either with or without his brother."

"Tell Mr. Rosenthal your plan, Geoff," laughed his friend. "Perhaps he'd like to accompany you."

Geoff explained his scheme.

"But are you good enough Boer for a game like that?" asked Rosenthal, obviously somewhat impressed.

"I could take in old Paul himself, as far as that goes—I have done so. I went with another fellow at Christmas, and sang hymns outside his house. The old boy was greatly interested, and came and preached to us in the street, but he didn't give us a brass farthing."

"Well, but—your brother—does he agree? He has to risk a good deal, it seems to me, because he has to be locked up."

"My brother hasn't quite made up his mind," said Geoff. "He is considering the matter, but I hope I shall persuade him."

"I think I may go," said Hugh. He had been talking, luckily for Geoff and his scheme, with two men who thought well of it.

"Upon my word, I don't know but what you mightn't work it, if you set about the thing

cautiously. Now I'll tell you what I'll do, young men—I'll offer you ten thousand pounds if you'll bring back my son, Jack, alive and well, together with your brother. Come, I mean it! If the offer is of any use to you in helping you to a decision, make a note of it, for I am serious."

"Oh no, sir," said Hugh. "If we went, we should go in any case for our brother's sake, and should need no pecuniary inducement; and, once there, we should be glad to help your son out of his scrape if the opportunity offered."

"Well, do your best, and if he arrives with you, you may draw upon me for ten thousand pounds. Come, it's a sporting offer."

"It's certainly a sporting offer," laughed Geoff; "but we don't want your money, Mr. Rosenthal. We'll do our best for Jack without being paid for it."

"Well, do your best; but, remember, I can afford the money, and your service would be well worth it, for another man added to your party would greatly enhance the risks, mind you. I can't bear to think of the poor boy being imprisoned there; for this infernal war 'll last two or three years, see if it don't!" said this pessimistic old Outlander.

The result of this conversation, and of others unrecorded, was that Hugh came completely round to think well of Geoff's plan; and, once converted, worked with all his might for its realisation.

Mr. Rosenthal asked, as a personal favour, to be allowed to present Geoff with a good horse, and as Geoff had no manner of objection to this, a beautiful animal was soon placed at his disposal. The plan was that Hugh, too, should start on horseback, and should ride as far as possible, but that he must go afoot if any Boers should be about, for Boers belong to the question-asking persuasion.

So Hugh procured the khaki uniform of an English trooper, and Geoff the brown corduroys of a Boer farmer, and early on a damp November evening—having taken a cheerful farewell of their mother—they set out upon their adventurous mission. Starting their riding from Estcourt, which they reached by train, the brothers took the westerly road towards Harrismith, making a wide sweep in order to pass well outside of the flank of the Boer position, leaving Ladysmith fifteen miles at least on their right.

They crossed the Tugela in safety, though not without challenge from the enemy's outposts, and heard in the distance the big guns of the English and of the enemy replying to one another in a nightly exchange of civilities as they passed on the flank of the invested English army.

More than once during the night they were pursued by small bodies of wide-awake Boers. But they preferred to be pursued at this stage of the proceedings rather than be asked awkward questions as to why Geoff's prisoner should be mounted upon a good horse, and other similar conundrums difficult to answer in so dangerous a neighbourhood, full, as Hugh expressed it, of confounded inquisitive people, who would be sure to want to know all about a fellow, even though he should assure them that he would rather be let alone.

That first night was spent uncomfortably at a point between the Tugela and the Harrismith road, but off the high road. The horses were hobbled, and allowed to wander in search of any grass that was to be found. They had had a big feed before leaving home, and would have to rough it for a day or two, after which Geoff hoped to be able to find more comfortable nightly quarters both for himself and prisoner and for their mounts.

Had any one been by to see, he would have been surprised to observe Boer Geoff and his prisoner tossing up for first sleep, and when Geoff had won the toss, would have been still more bewildered to see the prisoner, armed with the rifle of his gaoler, mount guard, while the latter stretched himself beneath a protecting boulder and abandoned himself to helpless slumber.

Half-way through the night the prisoner awoke his captor, and, presenting him with the weapon, took his turn at sleeping. The sight would have charmed a philanthropical spectator, who would doubtless have concluded that the Millenium had begun to arrive within hail.

Nevertheless, it was fortunate that Geoff's turn had come to watch, when, soon after dawn, a small party of Boers rode swiftly along the road, going towards Ladysmith, and, seeing the two horses grazing, dismounted in order to catch and annex them, believing them to have wandered from Heaven-knew-where.

Geoff could not afford to see his splendid mount and Hugh's useful beast commandeered before his very eyes within twelve hours of the start. He therefore hailed the Boers.

"Hullo, there!" he called out; "let those horses alone!"

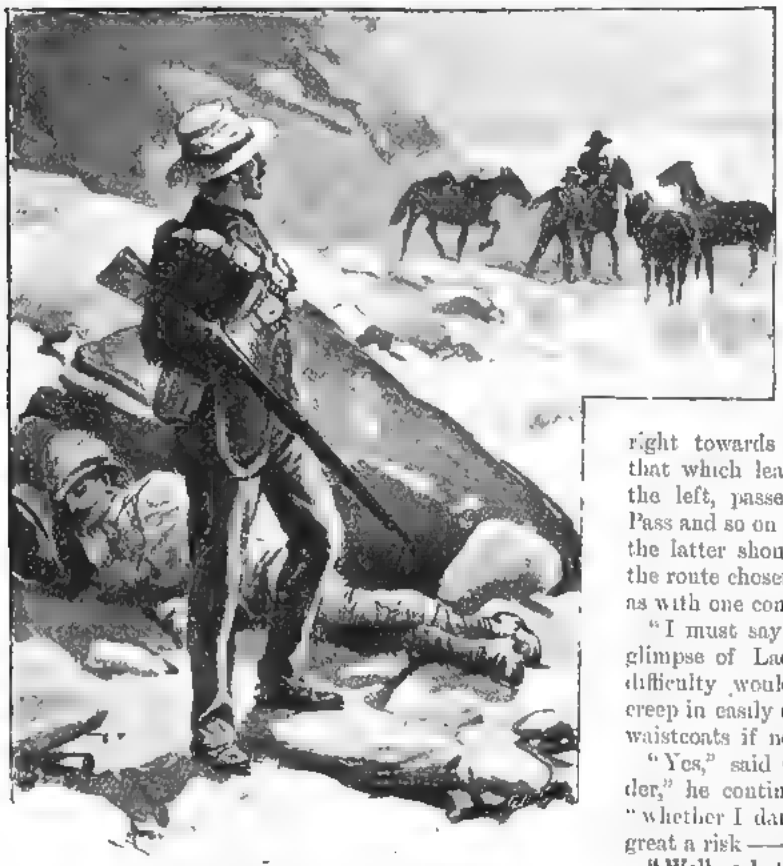
"Thunder!" exclaimed a Boer; "there's an owner, after all. Who are you, there, and what are you doing on the veldt?"

"I've taken a prisoner and his horse," said Geoff; "found the silly fool lost, and he surrendered to me without a blow."

"I see. Where are you taking him to, then?"

"Harrismith—they can send him on by train from there, or hang him for all I care, so long as they don't hang the horse."

"Probably he's one of the Nicholson's Nek fellows. What in thunder is the uniform he's



"HALLO, THERE!" HE CALLED OUT; "LET THOSE HORSES ALONE!"

wearing; and how does he come to have a horse?"

"Must have been a trooper in one of the colonial corps," said Geoff. "He has a horse, that's enough for me."

"You're not going to let him ride it, though, surely?" said the fellow; "you'll be a fool if you do. Make him run."

"Catch me letting him ride. I shall lead his horse and he shall run alongside. Do you take me for an idiot?"

"Come on, Piet; you'd talk all day if you were allowed!" shouted an impatient Boer who had ridden a few paces on; and Piet, to Geoff's relief, grinned and departed, leaving the brothers with one danger on the right side of their account; to the relief, also, of Hugh, who had shammed asleep throughout the conversation, deeming this the safest course, since he understood nothing of what was said.

"I suppose you would have told me in English if I had had to get up and break anybody's head?" he remarked.

Nevertheless, it was deemed wiser to lie hid for the whole of that day, and to travel in this dangerous locality only by night.

CHAPTER VII.

USEFUL SERVICE.

THE two scouts had not proceeded far from their hiding-place near the Tugela, next evening when they reached a spot, where one road branches to the right towards Ladysmith, while the other, that which leads straight on, or slightly to the left, passes through the Van Reenen Pass and so on to Harrismith. Of these two, the latter should unquestionably have been the route chosen. But both brothers paused, as with one consent.

"I must say I *should* like just to get a glimpse of Ladysmith," said Hugh. "The difficulty would be the horses; we could creep in easily enough on our feet, or on our waistcoats if necessary."

"Yes," said Geoff, reflectively. "I wonder," he continued, after a minute or two, "whether I dare or whether it would be too great a risk ——" he paused.

"Well, what?" laughed Hugh. "What infernal impertinence are you devising now, Geoff? asking old Joubert to hold your horse while you go and have a look at the town?"

Geoff laughed also. "Not Joubert," he said; "but really I don't see why I should not get somebody else to keep an eye on the horses—some Boer, of course, I mean—while we go on."

"My good man, where do I come in?" said Hugh. "You couldn't pretend you were taking your prisoner with you on a scouting job; you'd have to leave me with the horses at the mercy of some Boer. No thanks!"

"You wouldn't appear when I took in the horses, of course. I should go to the picket, and say I had smashed an English scout and bagged his horse, and would they kindly keep an eye on both horses while I did a bit of foot scouting? There are plenty of outposts within half a mile of us now; asleep, most of them, I'd bet! We might ride up close to the nearest we happen to come across on the way to Ladysmith, and before they saw *you*, you could slip off and wait for me while I took the horses on, and left them in charge; then I'd join you again."

"Upon my word, Geoff, it wouldn't be a bad plan if you are *absolutely* certain you can play the Boer well enough to pass. You look so horribly young, and, well as you talk Dutch, you might easily be spotted."

"My Dutch is safe," said Geoff; "and, as for looking young—half their fellows are quite as young as I am—I'm twenty."

"Well, try it then; I feel worked up for a spree to-night," said Hugh. "Only, for Heaven's sake be careful!"

So the venturesome pair rode softly towards Ladysmith, now distant about seven miles, and before they had ridden many minutes they stopped, for they heard in the distance the unmistakable sounds indicative of a laager—horses stamping and occasionally neighing, and a human voice at intervals.

"There'll be an outpost somewhere just here," said Geoff. "Wait for me among these boulders, I'll come back for you within a few minutes; if I'm not back in an hour you'll know I've gone to Pretoria to join Bunny, and you'd better get back home."

"Don't play any giddy tricks, and you'll be all right," whispered Hugh; "I'll wait here."

Geoff rode cautiously on, leading Hugh's horse, and presently was challenged by a sleepy voice.

"Look here," said Geoff, "I'm scouting; I've killed a sneaking Englishman and bagged his horse. I want to get closer in, and the horses hamper me, will you keep an eye on the beasts if I leave them with yours?"

"Fill my pipe for me and I will," said the Boer. "The horses are back there on the kopje. Give these to the groom there—kick the fool if he's asleep."

Geoff offered his 'baccy pouch. "That's English," grinned the Boer, "I suppose it was the *swinek* scout's before you knocked him on the head?"

"Yes," said Geoff, grateful for the suggestion. "I must get a Boer pouch!" he reflected.

Geoff left the horses and thanked his friend.

"There are some of our fellows mounting a gun a couple of miles on," he said, "on a hillock to the left of the road. It's a good gun, but *verdomte* heavy, they said when they passed. There was a German with them, swearing like the Evil One."

Geoff made a note of this fact. It struck him that here was something more than an excuse for paying a visit to the British camp.

He returned along the road for Hugh, giving a low whistle, their own family call, well known to both, a simple strain, something like the pipe of a golden oriole. Out came Hugh at once.

"Well," he asked, excitedly, "how has your impudence succeeded?"

"Perfectly, not a hitch! There's nothing like brass in this world, take my word for it!" Then Geoff described his adventure, including the information incidentally acquired as to the party of Boers at this moment employing themselves in mounting a gun.

"Why, man, things couldn't be better!" exclaimed Hugh. "We'll just look in and see how the German and his gunner fellows are getting on, and then hurry off to the camp and tell them about it; we'll do a good turn to our own side, after all, before starting off to fetch Bunny."

So the pair of scouts left the road, and ran and crept and ran again, and walked a hundred yards, then sprinted once more where they could, keeping as much as possible under cover, though it was dark and the place seemed clear of the enemy, excepting here and there an outlying picket, whom they took care to avoid. Once one of these good fellows took a chance shot at them, or rather at the sound they made, but as he did not see them, his bullet may have flown within a quarter of a mile of them, and may not.

"There you are, that'll be the gun kopje," said Hugh at length, as well as he could, for panting. "Better go on alone, in case you're seen by their patrol. Have a good look and count the men engaged, then come back for me here."

Geoff nodded, and crept carefully forward. For half a minute or so Hugh watched him creep and glide among the boulders and scrub. Then he disappeared.

Ten minutes passed, and Hugh began to think a full hour had gone by. Then at last Geoff came stealthily back—Hugh met him. Geoff's finger was at his lip.

"Hush!" he said, "they're only a quarter of a mile away. They are still struggling with the gun—a huge, long, heavy thing. They'll be four or five hours over the job yet. We've plenty of time to tell the General at Ladysmith, if we can get at him. There are seventy or eighty men employed."

"Jove! we ought to have them 'on toast' and the gun too," said Hugh, excitedly. "Come along, we won't waste a minute."

Without another word whispered the two brothers started at a quick run—over this hillock and up the next, and along a short, level piece and more hills, till, suddenly, they were brought up by an English voice:

"Who goes there?"

"A friend," said Hugh, stepping forward.

"Steady a minute, friend, then, and say what's your business. Why, one of you's a Boer!"

"Only a sham one, mate," said Geoff. "I'm a scout—we both are. Have you anyone you could send back into camp on horseback? We've a little job on that the General may like to know of."

"I don't know, I'm sure, whether I ought to let you pass—a feller dressed in Boer's kit! How do I know you're not a darned Boer scout up to some devilry or other?"

"Well, keep me here, then, and let my brother go forward. Or, keep us both, and send one of your fellows back with a note from us."

"Well, pass, then; you seem all right. Stop! give me your rifle to show you're square."

"Take it, by all means. Now step out, Hugh; we'll be in camp in twenty minutes."

After sundry short delays, thanks to the alertness of the various sentries passed on the way to the General's quarters, the brothers at last succeeded in getting a message conveyed to the commanding officer by an *aide-de-camp*.

This latter gentleman was somewhat astonished to perceive that one of those who desired to speak to him was a Boer. But he was soon persuaded that this was but the outer shell of a Boer, and the kernel good British flesh and blood.

"But why is one of you dressed as an Englishman and the other as a Boer?" he asked.

Hugh laughed, and explained that this arrangement was convenient for their purposes.

"You see, sir," he said, "when we want to enter our own camp I can pretend the Boer is my prisoner; and if we want to collect information in theirs, I become *his* prisoner."

"Highly ingenious," laughed the officer; "but mind you don't get sent to Pretoria without your Boer fellow one of these times, when you accompany him into their quarters. You run considerable risk, both of you! However, I'll tell the General what you say. If he believes your tale he may send out a squadron of Hussars."

The General himself came out, anxious to see the men themselves before deciding whether to believe them or no. He gazed curiously at one and the other.

"Didn't someone point you out to me at Reitfontein, or after, and tell me you had done some good scouting with Yule's troops?" he said, addressing Geoff.

Geoff blushingly acknowledged that he had had the privilege of being complimented on that occasion. This had occurred just after his separation from Bunny. Then the C. O. whispered something to his *aide-de-camp*, who departed quickly.

"I will take your names, gentlemen," said the General; "and in case you have given useful information I shall be glad to remember them."

He wrote the names Hugh Bigby and Geoffrey Bigby in his pocket-book.

"You will guide the Hussars to the spot in which you say the gun is now being mounted," he said. "You are sure you can return to it without mistaking the way?"

Both brothers hastened to give the assurance, and the General, after wishing them good night, and bidding them wait where they were for the troopers, returned to his quarters.

In a wonderfully short space of time a company of infantry and a squadron of Hussars were assembled ready to make a start.

"Now, guides, off you go!" said the officer commanding. "And, look here, no nonsense about forgetting the way or anything of that sort; if I have reason to think you are up to any tricks, you shall have a bullet apiece before you're a minute older, mind that!"

"All right, Colonel Evans," said Geoff, "you ought to know me better than that—I'm Geoffrey Bigby. I didn't play you any tricks with Yule's column, did I?"

"Lord, youngster, I didn't know you! Why, what a realistic Boer you have made yourself!" laughed the colonel, now recognising an old acquaintance. "Come—*you*'ll be all right, anyhow! Lead on; we have to be so careful now, you see."

The nightly promenade proved a brilliant little affair, one in which both the Hussars and the Branshires covered themselves with glory; for the gun was presently dismounted and partially destroyed, and the seventy Boers sent flying to all points of the compass—and this with scarcely a casualty to the British troops engaged. When all was over, Colonel Evans did not forget to express his thanks, and those of the General, to the two guides to whose good offices the successful little sortie was due.

"The General will be glad to thank you for himself next time you come into camp," he said; "and I shall take care that your services are not forgotten, however long you may elect to be absent."

With which genial words the colonel and his merry men returned joyously to camp, well pleased with the result of their little night enterprise.

"I'm glad we had that one little look in!" said Hugh. "Now we must hurry up and get back our horses. What if we find our old friends at the patrol camp have stampeded, like these others, taking our beasts with them?"

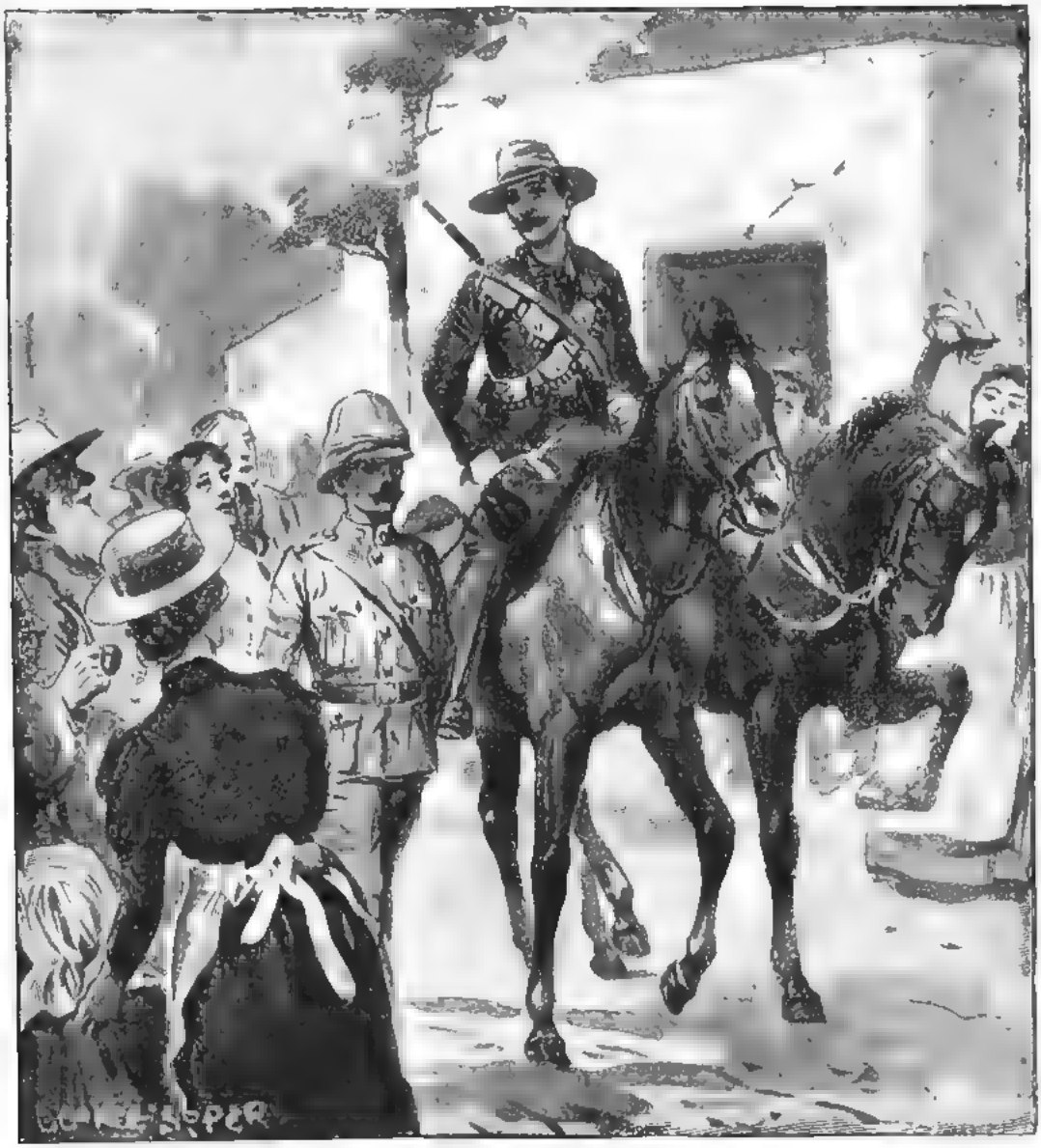
"Then we should have to go on foot, or by train," laughed sanguine Geoff, "unless we could steal another pair."

But the horses were safe enough, and Geoff concocted a cock-and-bull story of how he had met a body of English troops close to Ladysmith, evidently making a sortie, and how he had hurried by another road in order to warn the gunner fellows on the kopje, but had unfortunately been just too late.

CHAPTER VIII.

A RUDE SHOCK.

When Harrismith was reached on the following evening Hugh Bigby the prisoner of the party, was on foot and affecting to be weary and footsore.



THE WOMEN SWARMED ROUND TO EXAMINE THE PRISONER.

The place, like most of those passed through by them during their march northwards, was almost deserted, excepting by women and children and a few old men. Geoff had to answer innumerable questions, for the women swarmed round to examine the prisoner, addressing to him uncomplimentary remarks, and laughing in his face. Some informed Hugh that if they had their way they would lynch him to the nearest street lamp, together with all the rest of the Queen's soldiers that they could lay hands on. Hugh did not understand a word they said, and smiled blandly back at them.

"What are they saying?" he asked Geoff.

"They're saying what a good-looking chap you

are, and want to know if you're a married man," laughed Geoff. "Don't you go and be persuaded to choose one and settle down here for evermore."

"Sorry I can't, I'm sure, but I'm a prisoner—tell them so," said Hugh, highly pleased with the joke, and entirely unsuspecting of the real tenor of their remarks. He nodded and smiled at the ladies, however, and said "Good morning" in Dutch, the time being evening, but this was about all the Dutch he knew. Some of the women made faces in return for his genial salutations. These, Hugh concluded, were the jealous ones.

There was no difficulty about finding a comfortable lodging, and this night was passed in luxury, after a good supper had been discussed by both men.

In the morning Hugh limped out of the town as he had limped into it, while Geoff rode alongside and led the spare horse. There were very few abroad so early to see them, and no Boer ladies to make rude remarks, destined to be considerately translated by an indulgent captor in order to spare the feelings of his captive.

"We're doing it pretty comfortably so far, eh?" said Geoff. "There doesn't seem much difficulty about the business, does there?"

"I must say you do the Boer jolly well," admitted Hugh; "but you'll have to use all your wits before you've done, or I shall be surprised. Remember, this is the Free State we're in, and they may be sharper in the Transvaal."

Half a mile from town the prisoner jumped upon his horse and rode comfortably forward with his companion — the lion and the lamb travelling together in peace and accord.

But before midday the enterprising pair met with an adventure which gave them what is colloquially known as "a jar," and caused them to make certain modifications in their mode of procedure.

Round the corner of the road along which they were peacefully riding, each smoking his pipe, there suddenly met them a troop of fifty or sixty Boers hurrying to the front, led by a field cornet.

"Halt!" exclaimed the latter officer, apparently much astonished. "What is the meaning of this? Surround them, men!"

"This is my prisoner, Mr. Field Cornet," said Geoff, somewhat surprised and dismayed, but determined not to lose his head.

"Your prisoner, and riding! What for a *verdomte* fool are you, then, to allow a prisoner to ride? Can't you understand that he will escape you that way?"

"I am stronger than he is by this much," said Geoff, tapping his Mauser barrel.

"The deuce! idiot that you are, he jumps behind a boulder and he is gone! Get off the horse, you English fellow, you've got to run. Take the beast, one of you. Now, you, who are you and where are you going with him?"

"Pieter Kuyper, of Huyte's commando, Meyer's division," said Geoff readily, having prepared all this beforehand. "I'm taking him to Pretoria; he is one of those you Free Staters so cleverly caught at Nicholson's Nek, but this one was lost on the veldt for several days."

"Stop! Why are you travelling this way and not by rail? You are wasting time, if not skulking. Don't you know that every man is wanted at the front?"

"I shall be back very soon, officer—I am not a skulker," said Geoff, assuming a convincing air of offended nobility, "but I caught him some miles from camp, and was bringing him along until I should find someone, like yourself, who could give me a railway travelling order."

"That's easily done," said the field cornet, and he wrote forthwith upon a scrap of paper the order for Pieter Kuyper to convey his prisoner to Pretoria, and to return himself, free of charge, to the front.

"See you waste no time in returning," he said, "or, by thunder! there'll be questions asked."

"You have forgotten to pay me anything for the prisoner's horse, field cornet," said Geoff, boldly; but that gentleman had by this time ridden out of hearing, though some of his Boers laughed loudly when they heard the remark.

"Apply for it when you get back," someone shouted, "you'll find it carefully kept for you in the commandant's own stables!"

Half a minute later the party had disappeared.

"There goes your horse, old man," said Geoff, looking after them, "and, thank God, they didn't take you too. I was afraid they would."

"What was it all about?" asked Hugh, and when he had had the conversation explained to him, he, too, was of the opinion that they had come well out of a great danger. "They've commandeered the beast," he said. "I suppose they've a right, according to all one reads."

"But then, the next fellow may commandeer mine," said Geoff, "and we shall have to walk. At any rate, we've a free ticket by rail," he added.

"No. I don't like the idea of going by train," said Hugh; "one get's there too quickly, before one's plans are fully made."

Prisoner and captor took turns to ride the horse, but since it would look too suspicious for the English officer to ride while his Boer guard walked alongside, Hugh mounted only at such times and in such places as were considered perfectly safe, as, for instance, when there was a clear stretch of straight road and no signs of travellers upon it for a considerable distance ahead.

But once, before evening, they were caught in the act of changing.

Hugh had been taking his turn in the saddle when half a dozen Boers hove suddenly in view, joining the main Standerton road from a side road, and coming down at a hand canter to meet them, headed, as before, by a field cornet, who had probably beaten up the men from some out-of-the-way village where they had successfully ignored, up to this time, the trumpet's blast. The cornet seemed an ill-tempered person, or maybe he was angry.

"What is this *hocus pocus?* Did I see the prisoner riding upon your horse?" he said.

"He is footsore," replied Geoff, "and I gave him a short ride in mercy—especially as the horse is his own, or was."

"Then you are a fool, my friend," said the field cornet; "and you are not to be trusted with a prisoner, nor yet with a horse—certainly not with both together. Where are you taking him to, and why not by rail?"

"We shall join the railway at Standerton. I am all right with the prisoner—if he attempts to play the fool I could shoot him in a minute."

"You will be safer walking, nevertheless. Take the horse one of you there! Now, burgher, your name and farm, and the horse shall be restored to you after the war, or, at any rate, you can claim to have it restored; though, since you say it belonged to the Englishman, I doubt if you would get satisfaction."

Geoff gave his name and address: "Pieter Kuyper, of Rosengarten Farm, Potchefstroom District."

The field cornet took it down. Then he gave Geoff a receipt for "one horse commandeered—captured from the English by Pieter Kuyper."

"Where's your own horse?" he asked.

"Shot during the fighting on October 26th," said Geoff readily. "I have been on foot ever since until Providence sent me this fool and his horse."

"Well, old man!" said Hugh, when the officer and his men had ridden away in a cloud of dust, "it seems to me those field cornet fellows are just about as cool as they make 'em. They'd commandeer the bed from under you if they thought it a nice one."

"It seems our fellows—or our guns—have been dead on the horses, and they're hard up for mounts—that's what it means," said Geoff. "We're in for a forty or fifty-mile walk, and then train from Standerton—that's *our* programme."

"There's not much hardship in that," Hugh laughed, "especially as you'll have to carry the gun, not I."

Geoff sternly bade his brother remember his place, and not presume to laugh at him.

"You are my prisoner," he explained, "and if you are impertinent to me I shall make it extremely unpleasant for you."

"I'm bigger than you, and I'd punch your head for twopence!" said the prisoner, whereupon his stern gaoler announced that he would get his companion lynched at the nearest village if he were not careful.

"They have been quite inclined to do it once or twice already, you know," he added.

Hugh did not know this, fortunately for his peace of mind; but had he been familiar with the Dutch language, as spoken in this country, he would have comprehended that the remarks of the women in all the farms and villages he had passed through—as well as at Harrismith—had been the reverse of complimentary. Geoff had never informed him of this fact, being careful, to a fault, of his prisoner's feelings.

But at this moment the said prisoner was in high good humour, and not inclined to be awed by the sternness of his captor; he insisted upon that genial Dutchman producing the sandwiches, and sitting down to share the same. As a matter of fact, Hugh was greatly relieved to find that Geoff passed so well as a Boer, for he had in his heart of hearts been somewhat sceptical of his ability to do so. Each interview with parties of the enemy helped to convince him that Geoff had been quite justified in his sanguine expectations—the project was working wonderfully.

So the two sat down and enjoyed a square meal. The loss of their horses did not very much matter at this point in the enterprise; for though in the first part of their journey the animals had been indispensable, here their loss was no more than a regrettable incident. But, unfortunately, in the midst of their meal, while they sat and discussed hopefully sundry projects for the course of action to be taken at Pretoria—after Hugh should be shut up in prison, and Geoff left outside to devise and carry out the plan for releasing both him and Bunny—a rude shock was in preparation for the conspiring brothers. For with a great clatter of hoofs, and with much swearing in Dutch, there suddenly rode up from behind them the field cornet of half an hour ago. He led Geoff's horse, and his violent language was caused by the objections of that animal to being hauled along by the bridle at the flank of the cornet's own horse.

"Ha! here you are!" cried the field cornet. "That is good, Pieter Kuyper, for my conscience has rebuked me since I left you alone with this great prisoner-fellow here."

"Why—I shall be all right with him," said Geoff, his heart sinking, nevertheless, for he feared he knew not exactly what. "I see you

have brought back my horse," he continued boldly —"you ought never to have commandeered it, my friend."

"Oh, to the deuce with you!" said the cornet, laughing disagreeably. "I have brought the horse—yes, but you must walk all the same. I have reflected that I was wrong to allow you to go alone with this prisoner to Standerton; you ought never to have taken him out of Harrismith. Why should you, when there is a railway? Do you know what it seems to me, my friend, that you are doing? You are spending as much time as possible in conveying your prisoner by road towards Pretoria in order to shirk your duty at the front."

"When I meet you in the trenches you shall see that I am no shirker," said Geoff. "But why have you come to tell me this?"

"I have not. I have come to take your English gaol-bird back to Harrismith, where he shall be sent off by rail in safety, and to bid you hasten back to the front as quickly as you can get there and report yourself to me. You can ask for Field Cornet Arendson at the Frankfort commando outside Ladysmith. When you report yourself, I shall judge whether you have come as quickly as you ought; and when I have decided that point, I shall know whether I should complain of your conduct to the commandant of your division or overlook your foolishness."

"It is I that shall complain," said Geoff, dismayed by the turn events were taking, yet resolved to resist to the last. "You are exceeding your functions, Mr. Field Cornet. This is my prisoner, and it is my duty to carry him into safety. You have no right to interfere."

"Show me your authority for absenting yourself from the commando to which you belong? Ah! I see by your face that you have none—you are acting on your own responsibility. Take care, my friend, Piet Kuyper. Shirking is a dangerous game and punishable by death. I might shoot you if I were satisfied of your guilt; but I shall give you the chance of reporting yourself within two days. If you fail to do so, you shall be shot when found."

Geoff was silent, wondering whether it would be safe to shoot this man on the spot before he could separate him from Hugh, as he clearly intended to do.

"Come, tell the *rooinek* to prepare, and be sharp," continued the cornet. "Does he speak Dutch?"

"Not a word," said Geoff. "You must tell him what you want in English."

"I know no English. If you speak the language, tell him. Come—waste no more time."

Geoff was glad to hear this, for it enabled him to speak freely to his brother; though, since he did not altogether trust the cornet, who might know English better than he pretended, he thought

'DON'T FRET!' [illegible]

it prudent to speak very rapidly, in order to render his words more difficult to follow.

"This rascally Jack-in-office," he said, "is going to carry you off. Don't look so dismayed, or he may smell a rat. He says he will send you off by train from Harrismith. Shall I shoot him as he stands? Should I be justified?"

Hugh stood silent awhile, too stunned to speak. He thought hard for a moment.

"Don't shoot him," he said. "The other fellows would hear and come back. Wait about here. I sha'n't be with him long. I'm going to give him the slip. If I don't come, follow me by train."

"What's all the talk about?" said the cornet. "You seem too friendly with your prisoner, my man!"

"I was telling him he might give me a sovereign or so for treating him kindly," said Geoff; "but he refuses to pay me. Give me a receipt for him and take him, Mr. Cornet. I may as well enjoy the credit of having caught him when these things are counted up afterwards."

"You can have your receipt," said the cornet, scribbling the required paper, "and be hanged to you! Now then, you Englishman, up on saddle, there! Say it in English, curse you!" he added to Geoff, angrily.

Geoff did as requested.

"Mount, old man," he said; "and for Heaven's sake come back!"

Hugh mounted and rode off. He seemed to take no notice of Geoff, but he grinned over his shoulder as he rode away, and said:

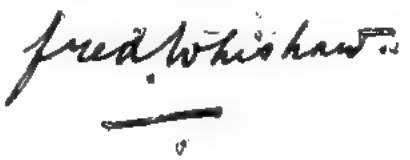
"Don't fret. *Au revoir!*"

But as Geoff saw him disappear he gave way to a fit of deep despondency.

"I ought to have shot the blackguard," he reflected. And a little later, feeling yet more depressed, he blamed himself more vigorously. 'Fool and ass that I was," he thought, "I ought to have shot him dead. It's war time, I should have been amply justified. *Idiot* that I was!"

Then he ran back along the road in the wild hope of pursuing the field cornet on foot and dragging him from his saddle. But Boer and Briton were already out of sight.

(To be continued.)



MY FAVOURITE CHARACTER IN FICTION.

(Contributed by readers of THE CAPTAIN.)

ADAM BEDE.

ADAM BEDE is my favourite character in fiction.

His strong personality stands out from the pages—living and real type of all that is best in the workman. Adam Bede is not an ordinary character: he is a man whose like we seldom meet—a man who, living, commands respect; and, dead, is not instantly forgotten.

Strength is an instinct with Adam. His whole character is one of upright, unflinching strength. His strength of will gives him power to resist the most violent impulses of passion. He is steeled against abuse. Brooking no wrong in himself he can suffer none in others, so that he has too little understanding of weakness.

About Adam there is no hesitation—no half measures; he does everything decisively or not at all. He is a man of deeds—not of words. He is a careful workman, skilled in his craft—letting none of his faculties rust in idleness. He is eager for knowledge; full of intelligence; steady, and clever. Such is Adam, ever keen and alert; looking fearlessly out upon the world—honoured by all who know him.

But he is yet to pass through the furnace.

His strong will bears him safely through the terrible anguish of his desolation and keeps him from violence. He comes through the ordeal a changed man, with the shadow of his great sorrow upon him. He has abundantly learned the lesson that we are all very human. His strength is not lessened—it is softened and perfected, in common with his every other quality. Happiness comes to him at last, and the strong, sorely-tried man passes from our sight in peace.

ARCHIBALD NEALE.

THE CUNARD LINER R.M.S. "CAMPANIA," ON THE MERSEY.

Her passengers are here embarking from the Riverside Station, Liverpool, *en route* for New York. In good weather the *Campania*, and her twin sister the *Lucania*, have steamed a distance equal to 622 statute miles in 24hrs.

(By permission of the Cunard Steamship Company.)

R.M.S "NILE," OF THE ROYAL MAIL STEAM PACKET COMPANY.

This steamer is usually employed on the mail and passenger service from Southampton to Brazil and River Plate, but has recently been under charter as a transport.

(By permission of the Royal Mail Company.)

It has been truly said that the Cunard Company occupies in mercantile history a position analogous to the earliest railway company, being the oldest ocean steamship line in the world. Thus it is only appropriate that our first illustration should be one of this famous transatlantic line's steamer, the *Campania*, and though this is not quite the biggest steamship afloat, there is now being built for the Cunard line a vessel that is going to break many—if not all—former records.

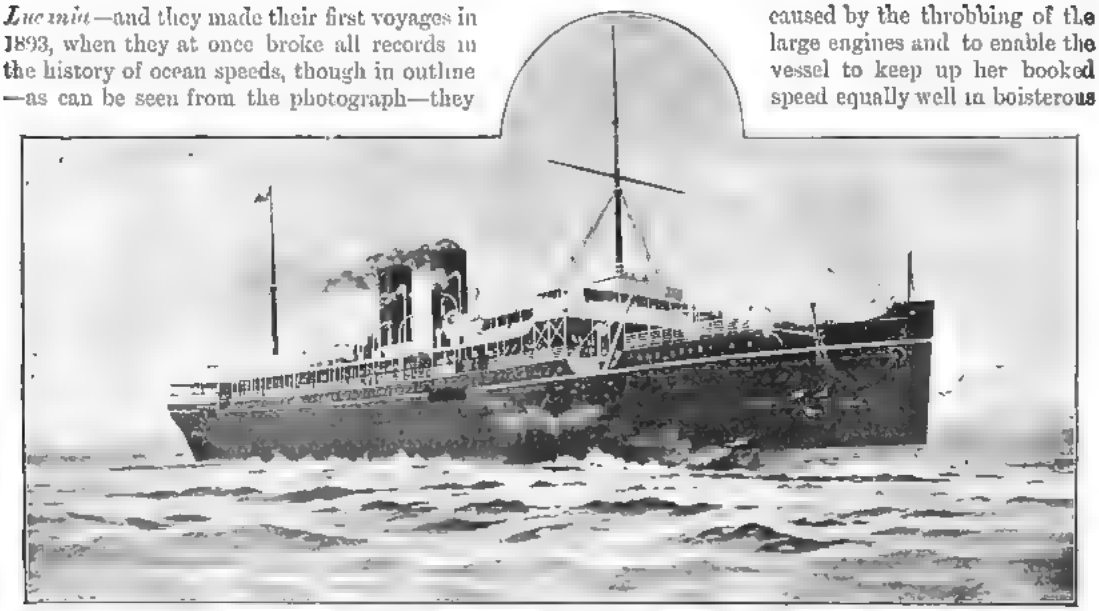
When the first steamship of the Cunard line—the *Britannia*—reached Boston, the number of passengers was thought so large—there were 63 all told—that the enthusiastic townspeople got up a special *fête* and public greeting in honour of the adventurous people who had dared the terrors of the Atlantic, in what was almost regarded in the light of some fiery dragon of the sea. Nowadays, however, the average number of people who cross the Atlantic by the various steamship lines every week is considerably over 8,000. At the head of the Cunard fleet stand, at present two sister-ships—the *Campania* and

A VIEW OF THE ENGINES OF A MODERN OCEAN LEVIATHAN.

Of all the parts of a modern steamship they are the most fascinating, being, so to speak, the very heart and life-blood of the vessel.

(By permission of the Union Steamship Company.)

Lucania—and they made their first voyages in 1893, when they at once broke all records in the history of ocean speeds, though in outline—as can be seen from the photograph—they

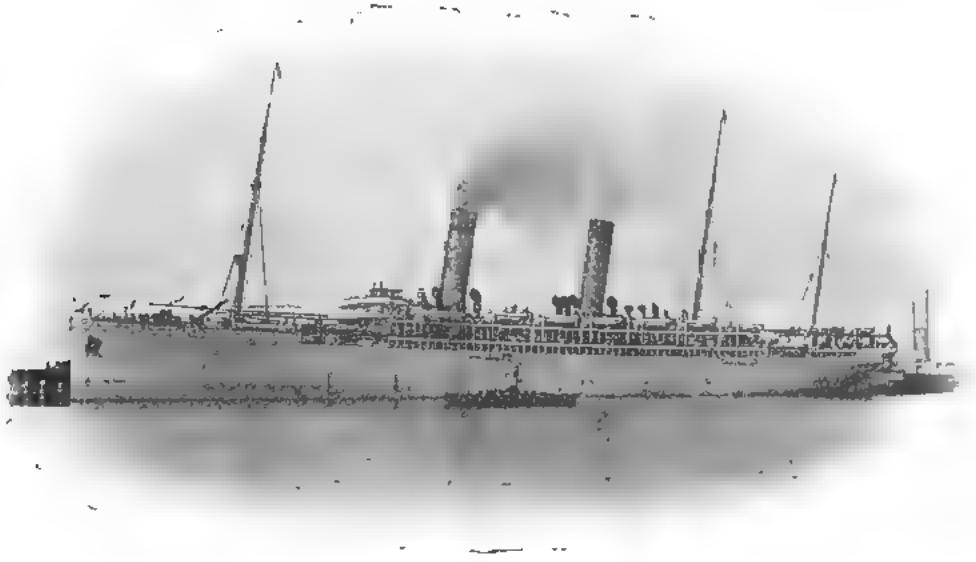


THE FAMOUS P. AND O. LINE OWN NO LESS THAN 57 LARGE AND FAST STEAMERS, REPRESENTING A TONNAGE OF 297,602.
(By permission of the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company.)

are as graceful as yachts. The *Campania* and *Lucania* travel to and fro between New York and Liverpool at nearly 25 miles an hour with the regularity and punctuality of a railway train, and in good weather they have steamed a distance equal to 622 statute miles in 24 hours. The *Campania* is still further distinguished by carrying the heaviest anchors in the world. They each weigh 8½ tons, and were tested to bear a strain of 120 tons, whilst the total weight of the *Campania's* cables is 105 tons.

A FIRST-CLASS SALOON.
At one seating this splendid apartment, 60ft. by 40ft., will accommodate 172 persons.
(By permission of the Union Steamship Company.)

The name of the famous White Star liner—the *Oceanic*—is probably well-known to most readers. Without any undue exaggeration, the *Oceanic* has been described as a "Hotel Cecil" afloat, and its designers have done everything in their power to destroy vibration caused by the throbbing of the large engines and to enable the vessel to keep up her booked speed equally well in boisterous as in calm weather, so that one Wednesday witnesses her departure from one side of the Atlantic and the same day of the following week sees her arrival on the opposite side. In fact, nowadays, the aim of the White Star line—and of most others, for the matter of that—is to endeavour more and more to make their steamers keep time, corresponding with the regularity of a railway train. According to a newspaper account, published at the time of the departure of the *Oceanic* on her first voyage, one day the partners of the White Star line sat round a table on which were the plans of two steamers—one, marked "A," was the plan of a leviathan which would eclipse anything yet accomplished in the way of speed; the other, marked "B," was the plan of a ship which would cross the



READY TO START!

The R.M.S. *Kinfauns Castle* was launched on May 12th, 1899, for work on the London and South Africa Mail Service. She has accommodation for nearly 600 passengers. Her gross tonnage is 10,000, and horse-power 10,500.

(By permission of Messrs. Donald Currie & Company.)

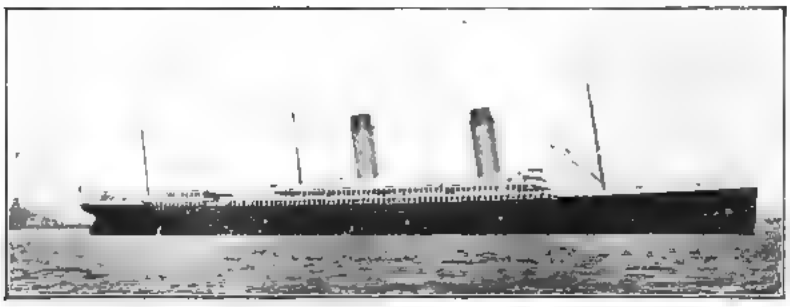
Atlantic all the year round with a punctuality not yet achieved. It was a question of speed or certainty, and the White Star line chose certainty—they adopted plan "B," and built the *Oceanic*.

We cannot all go to the Mersey or New York Harbour to see what a graceful and beautifully-proportioned vessel the *Oceanic* really is, but judging as best one can from the accompanying photograph, it will be agreed that her beautiful lines give but little hint of her truly gigantic proportions. Her rudder and stern-frame weigh 150 tons, whilst 100 tons of cable lie coiled under her foc'sle deck. She is composed of 17,000 steel plates, many weighing from 2 to 3¼ tons each, and her promenade deck is 400ft. long. The *Oceanic's* gross tonnage is 17,274, while the combined tonnage of the twenty-three vessels comprising the White Star fleet totals out at 148,359. Though, of course, I don't wish to infer that CAPTAIN readers are in any way superstitious there are one or two rather singular coincidences in connection with this great ocean greyhound. The *Mayflower* sailed with the Pilgrim Fathers from Plymouth for America on Wednesday, September 6th, 1620; the Oceanic Steam Navigation Company (White Star line) was registered September 6th, 1869; and the new *Oceanic* sailed from Liverpool for New York on Wednesday, September 6th, 1899.

THIS GIVES YOU A GOOD IDEA OF WHAT THE BOAT-DECK ON THE "KINFAUNS CASTLE" IS LIKE.

(By permission of Messrs. Donald Currie & Company.)

The Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company will, doubtless, seem more familiar to most readers when called simply the "P. and O." This famous line own no less than fifty-seven large and fast steamers, representing



THE BIGGEST BRITISH STEAMSHIP AFLOAT—THE FAMOUS "OCEANIC," OF THE WHITE STAR LINE.

Her gross measurement is 17,274 tons, and she has accommodation for 1,575 passengers and 450 crew.

(By permission of Messrs. Ismay, Imrie & Company.)

journeying backwards and forwards between England and Australia. The *Omrah*—the biggest steamer on this line—is the subject of one of our illustrations, and she is also on the Admiralty list of vessels suitable as armed cruisers. It is stated, moreover, she could keep at sea without recoaling for 150 days at a cruising speed of 10 knots. Another feature of the *Omrah* is that she can describe a circle in 2½ times her length within about 60secs.; and her steering-gear is what is known as a "friction-clutch," which, when an abnormally heavy sea strikes the rudder, gives way slightly so as to lessen the shock, after which the rudder returns to the central position.

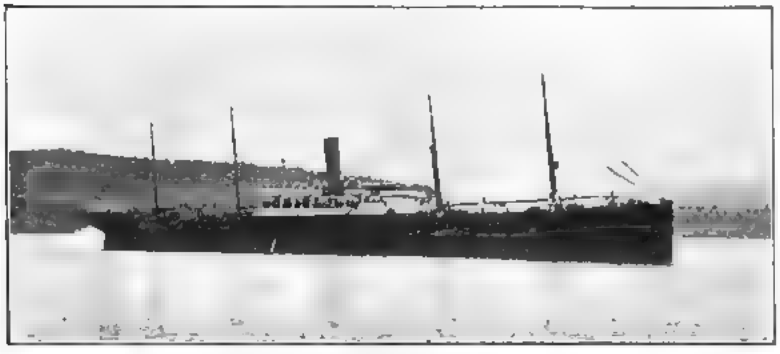
together a tonnage of 297,692, whilst the thirty steam tenders and tugs belonging to the company make up quite 3,000 tons more. On one occasion one of the P. and O. boats—the *Caledonia*—made a record by landing the mails at Bombay within 12½ days from London *vid* Brindisi, whilst the steamer's own journey from Plymouth to Bombay was accomplished in less than 17 days. "As good as a P. and O. boat" is the sailor's equivalent to the landsman's phrase "as good as the Bank of England."

TWIN-SCREW STEAMER "NEW ENGLAND," 11,400 TONS.

The steamers of the Dominion line ply between Liverpool and Canada and the United States, and are noted for the excellent arrangements they afford for all classes of passengers.

(By permission of the Dominion Line.)

Mention of the P. and O. naturally suggests some reference to the famous Eastern-going steamers of the Orient line, which are ever



ONE OF THE FINEST CARGO STEAMERS AFLOAT—THE "MONTEZUMA," OF THE CELEBRATED ELDER DEMPSTER LINE.

Her length is 500ft., her breadth (extreme) 69ft., her depth 33ft. 6ins., and her gross tonnage 9,500.

(By permission of Messrs. Elder Dempster & Company.)

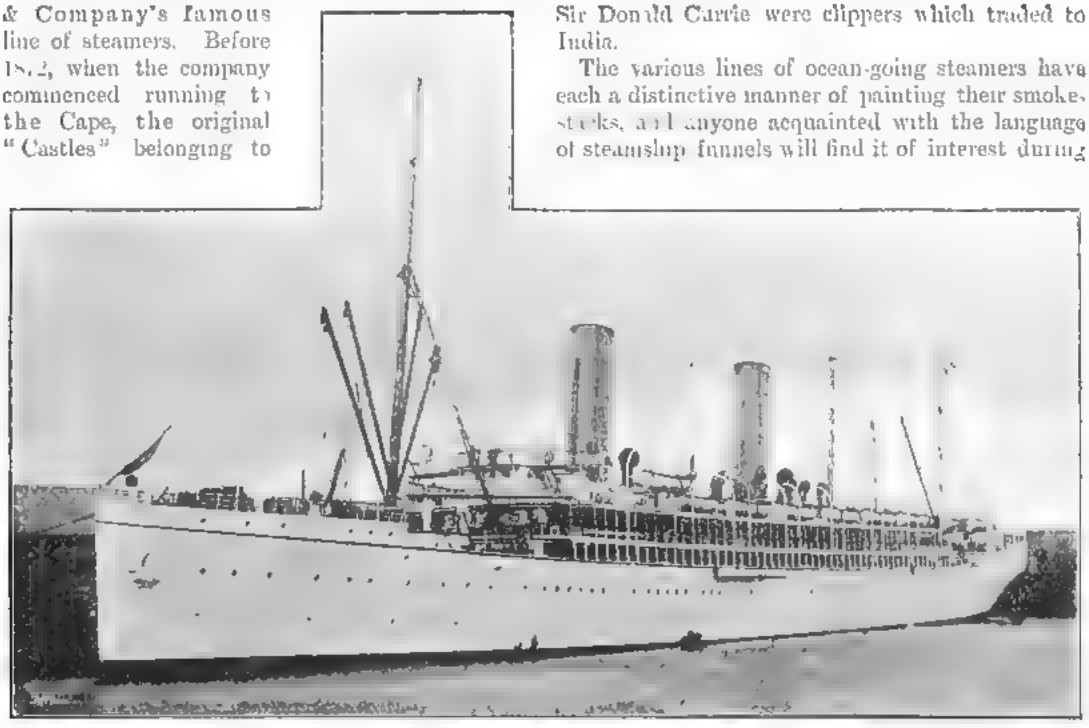
One of the best photographs illustrating this article is that of the R.M.S. *Briton* of the Union line, though it is not in any way too flattering to the fine steamer it represents. During the past six months the names of both the Union and Castle line must have become quite familiar to most readers on account of the important part the vessels of these two famous steamship lines have played in conveying troops and

munitions of war for the campaign in South Africa. Until a few weeks past the *Briton* was the largest vessel trading to South Africa, but the Union line's new ship, the *Saxon*, is the largest steamer at present trading from Britain to a British colony. What probably most strikes you when you first catch sight of the *Briton* is her colouring, as the hull is painted white. Many experienced travellers are loud in their praises of white paint for ships that pass through tropical seas—so much less of the sun's rays do the steel hulls absorb, and so much greater, consequently, is the comfort of the passengers. On another page you will find two capital illustrations of the famous *Kinfauns Castle*, of Messrs. Donald Currie & Company's famous line of steamers. Before 1872, when the company commenced running to the Cape, the original "Castles" belonging to Sir Donald Currie were clippers which traded to India.

THE SEA CAPTAIN'S SHIP IS HIS KINGDOM, OF WHICH HE IS THE ABSOLUTE MONARCH, AND ALL THE CREW AND PASSENGERS ARE HIS SUBJECTS. THIS PHOTOGRAPH SHOWS THE INTERIOR OF THE CAPTAIN'S PRIVATE SANCTUM ON THE R.M.S. "NORMAN."

(By permission of the Union Steamship Company.)

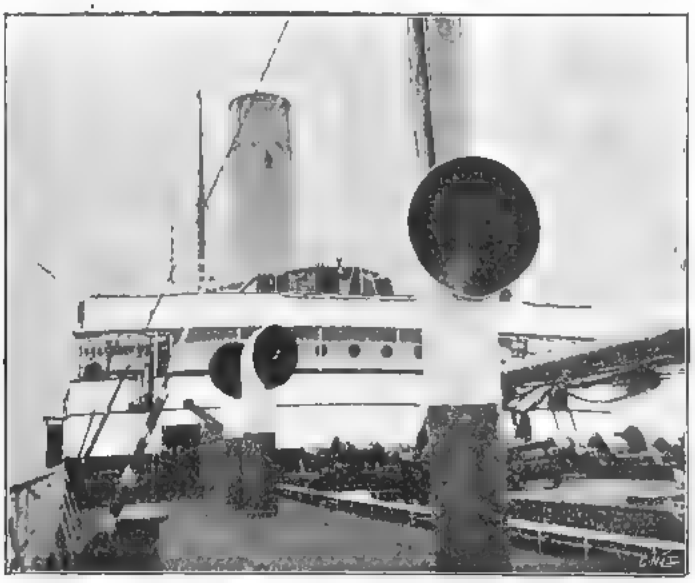
The various lines of ocean-going steamers have each a distinctive manner of painting their smoke-stacks, and anyone acquainted with the language of steamship funnels will find it of interest during



THE R.M.S. "BRITON."

Next to their new steamer, the *Saxon*, this is the largest and finest vessel on the famous Union line which trades to the Cape, Natal, and East Africa. In 1853 the five steamers which constituted the fleet of the Union Company included a *Briton*, but the united tonnage of the combined fleet then was only 2,327, while the modern *Briton* is herself of no less than 10,948 tons burthen.

(By permission of the Union Steamship Company.)



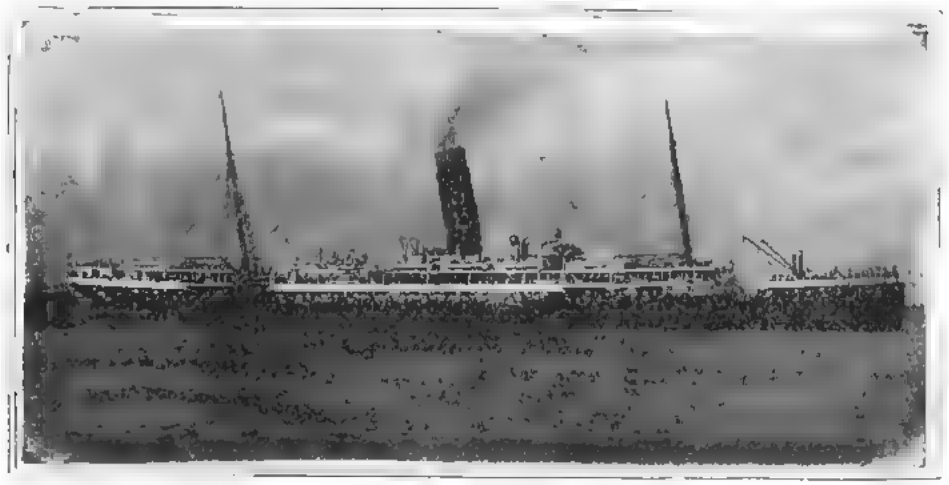
FORE-DECK OF A TYPICAL CARGO STEAMER.

This view, however, shows the *Montezuma*, which is a much bigger and smarter vessel than the general run of cargo steamers.

(*By permission of Messrs. Elder Dempster & Company.*)

a sea voyage, or whilst staying at a busy centre such as Liverpool. The funnels on the Cunard line are painted red, with a deep black band round the top, and two narrow black bands below. On the Inman line the funnels are painted black, with a white band some distance below the top. The Castle steamers have red funnels with a black band, and the White Star and Red Star lines yellow funnels with a black band, whilst the North German Lloyd, Union, Canadian Pacific, African, and New Zealand lines all favour plain yellow smoke-stacks. The Allan line steamers have their funnels painted bright red, with a broad black and then a narrow white band at the top. The funnels of the Dominion line are also painted red, but have a black band at the end and then a white one a little further down. The British India and Beaver lines both favour black funnels, which are crossed near the top by two narrow white bands. Black is a very popular colour for painting funnels on our great steamship lines, the Peninsular and Oriental, Royal Mail, Houlder, Orient, Pacific Steam, Liverpool and Australian, and General Steam Navigation companies all using it.

One hears so much about the vessels belonging to the great passenger steamship lines, that one is far too apt to forget what an important part the cargo and tramp steamers play in commerce at the present day. Mr. Rudyard Kipling once described the cargo steamer as "a shuttle of an empire's loom," and a more appropriate definition could scarcely be found. But in the space that can be spared out of a few thousand words, it would be an absurdity to attempt to describe the work carried on by cargo and ordinary tramp steamers, though perhaps some day room may be found for a special article on this branch of ocean work. All the



S.S. "OMRAH," OF THE ORIENT LINE.

This vessel was specially designed for the Australian mail and passenger service. The ship's name, *Omrah*, is the Anglo-Indian form of Arabic meaning "Emir of Emirs."

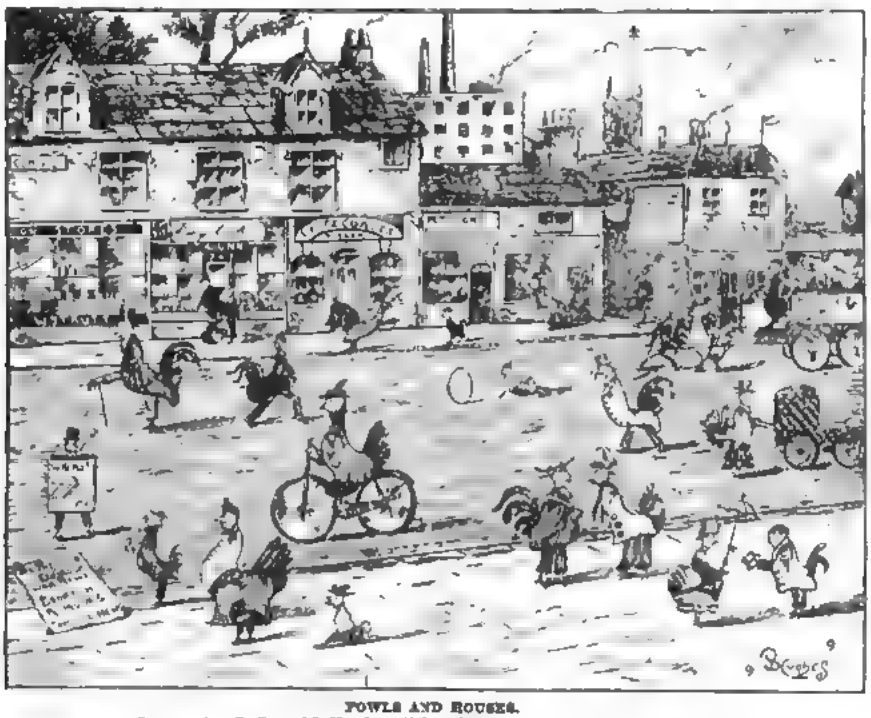
(*By permission of the Orient line.*)

goods and merchandise that come to us from foreign climes have to be carried across the sea in vessels specially designed for the class of work in which they are employed. When one tries to remember a few of the things in constant use in this country at the present day which hail from foreign climes—such as, for example, frozen meat from New Zealand, fruit from Spain and the south of France, tea from India and China, and corn and cotton from America—one gets some idea of the variety of uses these cargo steamers are put to.

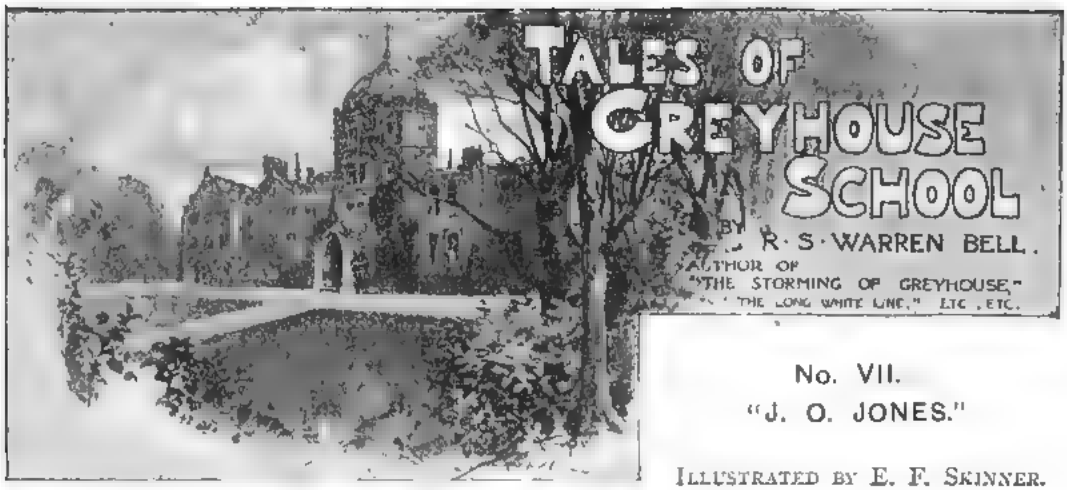
In past years life on an ocean tramp was a precarious existence indeed, but nowadays many of the steamers of our leading freight or cargo lines are running our fastest passenger ocean greyhounds very hard in the matter of speed. One of the most recent additions to this country's fleet of cargo steamers is worthy of special mention. She is one of the huge fleet of steamers belonging to Messrs. Elder Dempster & Company, to whose courtesy I am indebted for two snapshots reproduced in this article of their newest and largest vessel—the *Montezuma*—which were taken on her trial trip. One shows the vessel on the Clyde, and the other is a view of the fore-deck showing the captain's bridge. The *Montezuma* is specially designed for the London and Montreal service, and during winter months will generally be employed in carrying large cargoes of cotton between New Orleans and Europe. She can load the greatest number of bales ever taken in one vessel from America, and is fitted with twin-screw engines indicating 4,400 horse-power.

It is, perhaps, a regrettable fact that despite this country's great lead in the world's shipping industry, there are only nine steamers of over 10,000 tons register under the British flag, against nineteen similar German steamers. America owns four steamers of over 10,000 tons. They are the *St. Louis* and *St. Paul*, 11,629 tons each; the *Paris*, 10,669; and the *New York*, 10,674. But besides these no other nation in the world possesses a single ship of over 10,000 tons' register.

In conclusion, the vast strides made in shipbuilding since Britain became for the first time a maritime power, can be strikingly illustrated by comparing Britain's biggest steamship of to-day with the historic little *Mayflower*, which nearly three centuries ago braved the stormy waters of the Atlantic. So far as can be ascertained, the *Mayflower* was 180 tons burthen; the *Oceanic's* gross measurement is 17,274 tons. The former carried 100 passengers, whilst the latter has accommodation for 1,575 passengers and 450 crew.



FOWLS AND ROUES.
Drawn by J. Donald Hughes, "Special Pages" winner this month.



No. VII.

"J. O. JONES."

ILLUSTRATED BY E. F. SKINNER.

GOOD old "J. O."—what memories I have of thee! With what pride did I point out thy huge, slouching figure to visiting sisters and cousins—how fierce my wrath when they uttered criticisms disparaging to thy appearance and attire! As for you—why, you cared not a button what folks thought of you or said of you. You went on your lonely way, without a chum, equally heedless of the praise or blame meted out to you by your schoolfellows—all you wanted was to be left to yourself. The masters gave you up as a bad job; when other fellows were imprisoned on hot afternoons for not knowing their "Rip" you strolled off into the country, a free man, rejoicing. At least, I suppose you rejoiced; your face was never an index to your heart. It was an expressionless sort of mug, that face of thine; but, if I remember rightly, you were not a bad-looking sort of chap. On the rare occasions when you were "caught smiling" you showed a set of the whitest, healthiest teeth in Greyhouse, and you had a strong, straight nose, and a solid jaw. Any facial peculiarity always procured its owner a nick-name, but you gave us no opportunity that way. You never had a nick-name. We might have called you "Herky" (brief for Hercules), or "Sammy" (familiar for Samson); but, no! you were always "J. O. Jones," and as "J. O. Jones" you are still talked about in the school. Whenever I meet an old boy of our time he talks about you. At the present day (so I am assured) the new boy is conducted (by his patronising friends, the one-term boys) and shown the place where you performed some remarkable feat of strength—that particular part of the field, for instance, where, holding the ball high above your head, well out of reach, you struggled over the line with four of the opposing team—big men all—desperately hanging on to you. If you had only been a bit quicker on your pins you'd have been an International, easy.

Opportunity must have been kind to you, for certainly you never went out of your way to display your powers. Don't you remember your wrestle with the runaway steed just outside the Gates? I dare say—it would be just like you—you have forgotten all about it. 'Twas a dog-cart and a maddened horse, and a pretty girl, and you got him by the hair, and your tussle was a sight for gods and men to behold. And you won—and she thanked you ever so nicely, and all you muttered (so history says) was "Not at all!" And she discovered your name and wrote to you, and you shoved her letter into the pocket of your shabby old coat, as if it had been a tailor's bill. Not even a blush!

But I will now end my opening address to you, and tell others, in straightforward language, of your mightiest deed. The school bard of that epoch burst into verse about it, and somebody else—who shall be nameless—wrote an account of it in the magazine; but both are lost, and so, entirely without your permission, "J. O.," I will make a new story of it.

It was before Greyhouse overflowed its banks, so to speak, in the matter of numbers, and had to build or hire extra houses for the reception of

scholars, that what I am about to speak of took place.

The ancient place at that time was an imposing, compact mass of stone, gabled and turreted, with a big round tower in its midst, surmounted by a dome and a cross—emblems of its holy origin. On the right of the tower were situated the Head's house and the dining hall; above this latter being a long dormitory containing forty beds. On the left of the tower were the other masters' sitting and bedrooms, other dormitories, class rooms, and studies. Behind was the quad. and the big schoolroom, this latter having been erected about the middle of the present century. In fact, Greyhouse suffered about that time from an epidemic of "improvements," and was much mauled about by the builder demon.

Now, the main staircase of the establishment started at the top of the tower and wound its way down to the ground floor in an absurdly narrow fashion. At the foot of it, opening on to the corridor on the left of the tower, was a huge door, decorated with iron studs and panels. It was such an old and such a peculiar door, that it took precedence over all other doors, and was, in fact, known as "The Door."

When everybody was in bed it was the duty of the school porter,—old Cripps—to lock The Door, and at 6.30 in the morning to unlock it. If, for some special reason, anybody was up very late, or wished to be down particularly early, he used another staircase which was ordinarily reserved for masters and monitors, and which led into the music room, situated on the right of the tower.

It was a great sight of a morning to watch Greyhouse tumbling downstairs and through that doorway in order to reach its seat in the big schoolroom in time for early roll-call—often in a sad state of disarray, buttoning waistcoats, or braces, or collars; noosing up the tie or dabbing desperately at the scalp with the idea of making some sort of a parting in the hair. Sometimes a particularly untidy boy would be sent back to his "dorm" and counted late, but as a rule the master on duty did not allow himself to be too critical regarding the average Grey's toilet. At 7-30, sharp, the monitor on duty shut the door of the "Big" with a bang, and an inexorable expression on his face, deaf to all such pleadings as: "It wants ten seconds yet to the half-hour," or "Oh, Maggs, let me in. I say, I've been late twice this week, I shall be sent to the Head," or anything of that nature. "J. O. Jones" wasn't often late — if he was he did his lines without a murmur — but once a particularly unpopular monitor (the sort of specimen that liked getting fellows into a row) shut the door a full minute and a half before time. The angry mob of still-dressing Greys outside increased in volume, and loud was the outcry. "J. O." appeared, and, in a slow way, consulted his watch. He saw that an injustice had been done by the monitor, who had unwisely put his foot against the door. "J. O." cleared the way and tilted at the door, and the legend is that the monitor inside flew

FOUR OF THE OPPOSING TEAM DESPERATELY HANGING ON TO YOU.

twelve yards through space, yelling for "Help!" Anyhow, he never shut the door again before it was time so to do. But, mind you, "J. O." was not in the habit of defying the authority of master or monitor. The big man "noo 'is place," as Cripps would say.

Well, it had been one of the hottest days that ever I do remember—a regular toasting, broiling, just-sit-still-and-swig-lemon-squash kind of day towards the end of the summer term. Greyhouse was reduced to an unpleasant state of languid stickiness by the time the sun went down. "Prep." was got through somehow, and Greyhouse wended its weary way into chapel, emerging fifeeen minutes later feeling quite too done up to have any energy left for humbugging about or ragging. The air was most close and oppressive—not a breath of breeze came to the relief of panting mortals. Greyhouse went off and lolled on its bed until somebody in authority roused it off and made it undress. Then it lay with one sheet over it, courting slumber, every now and again getting up to drink tepid water out of a tooth-mug.

"J. O.," being only in the Fifth, went to bed at the same time as the rest. The weather, however, never affected him. He lay down, and went off like a top.

Soon after eleven the school was hushed—most of the fellows had dropped off to sleep. Cripps, after locking The Door, retired to his own sleeping den, and solaced himself with a big jug of ale that he had persuaded out of the cook.

By this time all Greyhouse was asleep, and asleep Greyhouse remained for half an hour, but no longer; for of a sudden there came a crack of thunder that caused half the fellows to sit up with a start and peer round at each other in amazement. *S-s-s-s-s-s!* A long, jagged flame of forked lightning illuminated the gloom, and then, with hardly a pause, the thunder boomed out again with an explosion as loud as that of a hundred "Long Toms." Once again the blinding sheet of angry electricity, and again the roar of Heaven's artillery, and then a flood of rain such as had not fallen all that year. With it came a gale of wind, howling and shrieking like a mad thing round the old turrets, so that, what with the rattle overhead and the jagged flashes, and the furious sweep of gale and rain driving against the windows together, it was a thunderstorm with a very vengeance.

The more timid of the boys put their heads under the clothes, or listened, open-eyed and open-mouthed, to the wild music of the raging elements. The stouter hearted composed themselves for slumber again. But worse terrors were in store for them. There came a flash of lightning ten times more vivid than anything preceding it, and then a roar as of a thousand howitzers exploding simultaneously. Following sharp on this came an altogether different sound—more human, more earth-like—a sound of falling timber, and stone, and mortar. The dome over the central tower had been struck by a thunderbolt.

Out of his bed, like a stone from a catapult, shot every boy in the long dormitory—out of his bed and down the room, and out into the corridor—for some of the masonry had crashed on to the roof of "the Long," and the noise made the scared inmates imagine that the old school was crumbling up. They raced out, jamming and jostling against each other in a wild dash for The Door, down the corridor to the staircase, and down the staircase like a flock of frightened sheep.

And here lay the danger. Those in front were forced down by those above, and at length the foremost of all reached The Door. But The Door was fast locked.

Shouts for "Cripps" issued from the foot of the staircase, a place which was now becoming unpleasantly packed. For inmates of other dormitories, hearing the quick patter of bare feet outside, joined the passing throng. On every side pale-faced, half-awake boys were asking questions which nobody troubled to answer. It was a selfish, headlong stampede; each for himself; *sauve qui peut!*

Monitors and masters, half-dressed, were mingled with the crowd, and doing all in their power to stem the flood of fugitives But they were brushed past and shaken off. There is nothing so terrible in its irresistible strength as a frightened, unreasoning crowd. It will not pause to think, but it runs in one direction, bearing all before it.

These night-shirted beings, by sheer force of custom, were making for one goal—The Door. Safety, they imagined, lay beyond it, and by dint of daily habit they found themselves pushing along and then down towards the familiar means of exit.

Still from below came strenuous calls for "Cripps," and the very necessary key on the porter's bunch. Moans and sobs pitiful to hear swelled the babel. The pack down by The Door was enormous, and was increasing in density every moment. It was a turbulent, fighting mass, those below striving to get up the stairs again, and those above striving to get down to The Door. And the weight and advantage was with those who were above. Matters were approaching a crisis. The captain of the school consulted hastily with the most clear-headed of the masters near at hand.

THEY RUSHED OUT, JAMMING AND SCUFFLING AGAINST EACH OTHER IN A WILD DASH FOR THE DOOR.

"This means murder, sir. What are we to do?"

"Well, we must stop any more going down. Look here, get all the big fellows you can, form a line at the top of the staircase, and stop the rush. Then you must begin to pull the fellows up by main force. We'll help you all we can."

So now the masters and the seniors began to act on a definite plan, and the rush down was arrested. It was hard work doing that, and harder work still pulling them up.

Hovering round, endeavouring to lend a hand, but really getting very much in the way, was Mr. Kitt, the music-master—an under-sized little gentleman with mild eyes and soft biceps.

This being no time to stand on ceremony, Mr. Kitt was abruptly requested to "keep out of the way" by one of his colleagues, a brawny, rowing "blue" from Oxford. Somewhat hurt, Mr. Kitt complied with this request. And then an idea struck the little music-master.

Where, all this time, was that monarch of muscle—J. O. Jones?

"J. O." slept in dorm. 8. Mr. Kitt made his way thither as quickly as possible, and managed to get there all right in spite of the fact that he was knocked down and trampled on twice in the course of his journey.

There, in his bed, lay "J. O.," slumbering as peacefully as a little baby.

"Jones—get up!"

Mr. Kitt shook the drowsy giant, and at length "J. O." sat up and blinked at his disturber.

"Get up, sir?"

"Yes, slip on something and follow me. You're wanted badly."

In a dazed way "J. O." pulled on his light grey flannel bags—the usual everyday attire at Greyhouse during the summer—and followed Mr. Kitt.

They soon reached the staircase, and something of the truth came home to the bewildered senses of "J. O." when the captain of the school grasped him roughly by the shoulder.

"You're the very man, Jones. Just stand here and begin chucking the fellows back and we'll pass them into the passage. You needn't mind about hurting them. It's life and death. We *must* clear a way down to The Door."

Only dimly understanding that something very bad was happening, but realising that some hard work was wanted from him, "J. O." promptly began picking the fellows off the stairs and hurling them to the group of monitors and masters above him.

One-two-three-four-five-six! Before a frightened small boy quite knew what was happening he felt himself clutched in a grip of iron and whirled through the air, then grabbed by half-a-dozen pairs of hands, and shoved into the corridor.

Seven-eight-nine-ten-eleven-twelve!

"J. O." was warming to his work. By this time he had stripped his sleeves up and tightened his belt. Certainly he looked more like a butcher than a school-boy, but that didn't matter.

Twenty!

"J. O." drew a deep breath, and continued his work of rescue with an energy worthy of the highest praise. He didn't much mind where he got hold of his victim, so long as he got hold of him somehow. Every now and then, in his panic, a fellow would strike out to resist "J. O.'s" nurse-like attentions, and one even drew blood from "J. O.'s" nose, but "J. O." merely mopped the injured organ on the sleeve of his night-shirt, and went on with his work looking more like a butcher than ever.

In spite, however, of "J. O.'s" efforts, and those of the masters and monitors behind him, the fellows at the foot of the staircase were in a horrible predicament. They were jammed and squeezed together like sardines; some had fainted and would have fallen had they not been supported by the close-pressing bodies of their companions.

The captain approached "J. O."

"We must get that door open somehow, Jones. Think we can burst it?"

"Where's the key?" blurted out "J. O."

"Cripps can't be found—*he* has it. We must do something or the chaps below will be suffocated. Look here—you see these two ledges—they run parallel all the way down. Couldn't you hoist yourself over the heads of the chaps and get your shoulder against the top of the door? You'll have to get one foot on one ledge and one on the other."

"I'll try," said "J. O."; "got anything I can use as a wedge?"

Mr. Kitt heard the question and scurried off like a rabbit. He returned quickly with his bedroom poker and tongs.

"These may do," said "J. O.," and commenced his descent, getting along by means of the ledges, and at times finding a resting place for his feet on the shoulders of the mob beneath him.

At the foot of the staircase the air was so thick and hot that he could hardly breathe. But the sobs and groans of the poor boys beneath him gave him new vigour.

The Door was very strong, but it was very old. He pushed the top of it with all his might, and at length got Mr. Kitt's poker through. Then he squeezed the tongs through.

Then he forced both to the right, and they bent like wands. "This won't do," muttered "J. O.," and paused for breath. Next he put his great shoulder against The Door, and pushed for dear life.

At last—at last—he got his brawny left arm through. Then he got his elbow against the corner and doubled it—and The Door gave a little. The corner of it was buried in his flesh, but he hardly noticed that.

Now he let poker and tongs drop outwardly, and pressed with his elbow until he could squeeze his other arm through.

The old lock was creaking in torment, but it still held out.

"J. O." then used both arms, and put his whole weight against the top of the door. He shoved and strained, panting and sweating with his exertions, but the door grimly resisted him. He was growing weaker. He looked down and shuddered at the sight of that helpless mass of white-clad beings. Their safety depended on his exertions.

"Now or never," he thought, "'cos I'm about done. Here goes!"

Those above were listening—listening with straining ears. They couldn't get down far enough to see.

CERTAINLY HE LOOKED MORE LIKE A BUTCHER THAN A SCHOOLBOY, BUT THAT DIDN'T MATTER.

And while they were listening they heard a great rending and cracking of timber, and then a thunder-like crash, and a thud.

The boys above melted away downstairs. There was room now. Masters and monitors followed. When they reached the foot of the staircase they found The Door laying prone along the corridor, and "J. O.," bleeding from head and arms, picking up inanimate forms.

Then followed a brisk half-hour's hospital work—the head master, his wife, and all the servants lending a hand.

When it was over the Head went over to "J. O."

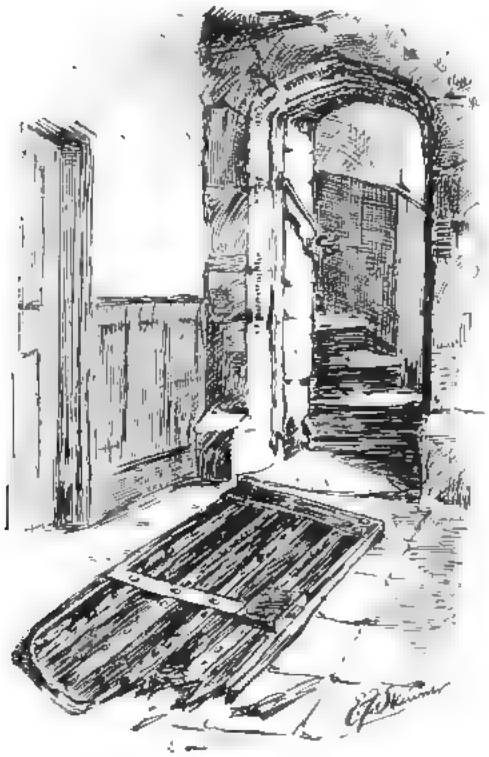
"Jones, all our thanks are due to you. You saved many lives. In the name of everybody I thank you very much indeed."

"Not at all, sir," muttered "J. O."

That was "J. O.'s" mightiest deed. When we came to survey the scene by the early morning light we found that "J. O." had burst The Door *off its lock and hinges!*

And great was the wonder thereat. It was, as I have said, celebrated in verse and prose, but "J. O." didn't even take the trouble to read these efforts.

The Head and everybody clubbed together and gave him a fifty-guinea watch. "J. O."



put it in his box, alongside his "footer" boots, as he preferred his old silver turnip to this gorgeous timepiece.

Cripps, by the way, we never saw again. It appears that he went off to the pantry to get some more beer and fell asleep there. A fellow servant had found him there at daylight and told him what had happened, and Cripps left the school quite quietly and without waiting to say "good-bye" to anybody. Nobody regretted his departure. Some of the chaps who were crushed at the foot of the staircase had a long time in hospital, but they all pulled round in the end.

And you should have seen what an ovation "J. O." got on Prize Day.

But he seemed very much bored by it all. That was just like J. O. Jones.

R. S. Warren Bell

OUR DEBATING SOCIETY.

THAT a school debating society affords the very best training for a Parliamentary career I have not the slightest doubt. I was present last session at a debate in the House of Commons, when the Irish members were having a field-day, and I was reminded irresistibly of my old school society.

How well I remember the subjects of those debates. There were the usual stock ones which have been in existence from time immemorial, and which will be discussed so long as debating societies last.

"That, in the opinion of this House, capital punishment is not desirable." "That it is desirable that the House of Lords should be either ended or mended." "That corporal punishment is not desirable."

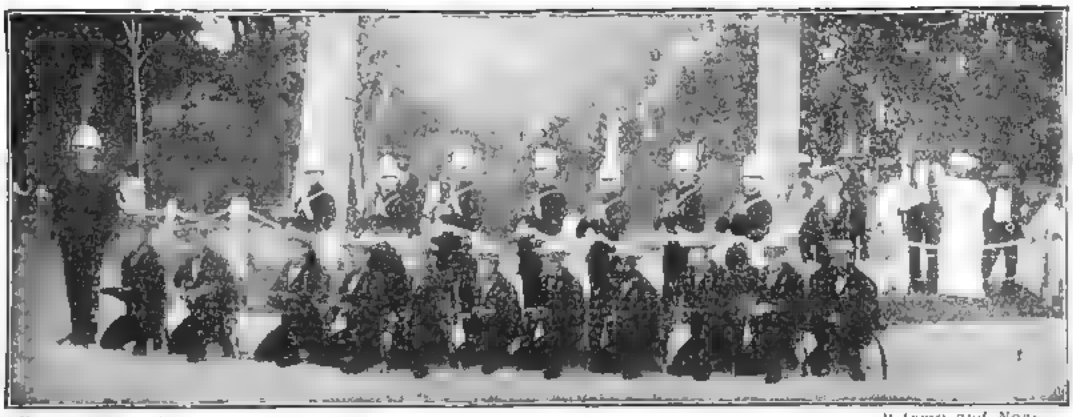
I remember that word "desirable" was always by some unwritten law dragged into the words of a motion. I attempted once to frame a subject without the word, but was immediately frowned down by the secretary. Something or other is, will, ought, must, or must not be "desirable." I once attempted to introduce a debate—"that, in the opinion of this House, the use of the word 'desirable' in all the society's notices is not desirable."

But the motion was immediately quashed by the president as tending to frivolity. I can remember how warmly we discussed the deceased wife's sister question, how we argued and harangued and sweated over the rights and wrongs of an eight hours' day for workmen. But perhaps the best debate of all was one we had on the desirability or otherwise of marrying for money. Oh, the holy wrath and horror of our poet at the thought that such a motion could be brought forward! How bravely most of us stood up for the love marriage at all costs! How uncompromising we were!

Some of my most lasting friendships were made in that debating society, and often when we meet we remind one another of our stirring feats of oratory.

All of us now are in the thick of the battle of life. Some of us have gone up, some down. Many of us have had to decide in a practical manner some of those very questions we used to discuss with so much ardour in our school debating society.

A. E. M. F.



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BLUEJACKETS AND MARINES OF H.M.S. "TARTAR."

WHEN YOU LEAVE SCHOOL.

By A. E. Manning Foster.

No. X.—HOW TO JOIN THE NAVY.

Every Englishman, perhaps I should say every Briton, has the making of a sailor in him. It is in the blood—gloriously transmitted from the days of the old Norse Vikings, of whom every boy loves to read. The strength of our "bright, tight little island" lies in its Navy. But it is not only the supremacy of the seas and our safety at home that the British warships ensure for us. Our empire, our colonies, could not exist in safety without them.

Our gunboats have a reputation of turning up at unexpected places at unexpected times. They are here, there, and everywhere. A missionary, British or foreign, is murdered in some far-off South Sea island—a few weeks or months afterward, as the case may be, a British gunboat casually turns up, and a little prize firing is engaged in at the expense of some savage chief. Or it is reported in Singapore that a gang of pirates are interfering with trade on some narrow sea in the East Indies—a cruiser is despatched, and if she is fortunate a few score of Malays learn to appreciate the value of quick-firing guns.

And now, in time of war, the Navy keeps watch and ward over our interests in places where least expected.

The British Navy at the present time is in a high state of efficiency. We have more cruisers than any other three nations put together, while we are far ahead in torpedo boat destroyers. France has indeed a huge fleet of torpedo boats, but the destroyer has taken the place of older and slower craft, and in the matter of destroyers Britain has set the example to the world. With this much by way of preface, I must pass to the consideration of how those who desire may become units in this grand profession.

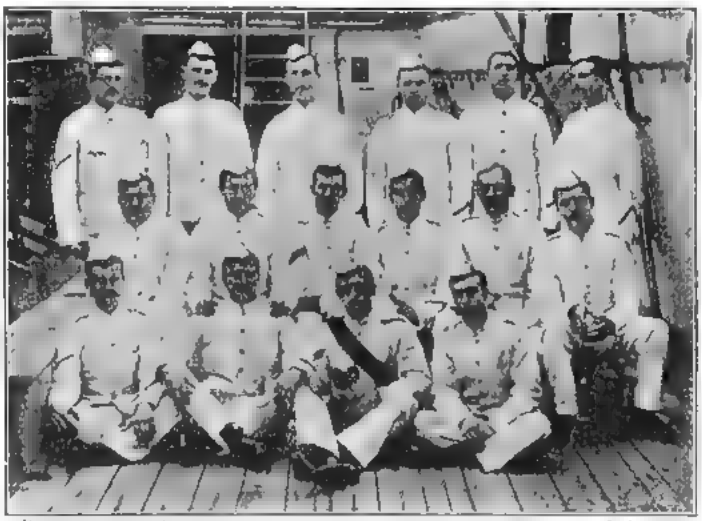
First as to qualifications. No boy should think of joining the Navy unless he has good health, a good constitution, plenty of pluck and courage, and some knowledge of the kind of life he will have to lead. With regard to the first, as soon as this profession has been finally decided upon, a candidate should be thoroughly examined by a doctor. Any physical defect, disease of the throat, liver, or kidneys, any malformation, and, indeed, any marked weakness of constitution will form a fatal bar to admission. Then as to pluck and courage, a boy shows his mettle very early, and will soon give proof of the kind of life for which he is fitted. If he be athletic, pugilistic, of a roving, adventurous nature, he will not be far wrong in having a shot for the Navy. And last, but by no means least, before finally settling upon the profession, the boy should know something of the life by reading about the Navy; by reading the books of Captain Marryat, Clarke Russell, and other well-known writers who know what they are writing about when they touch naval matters. I should not advise him to learn about a naval life from sentimental ballads, or from the various halfpenny dreadfuls that are circulated in such profusion nowadays, with glaring pictures of Jack Giddboy, the brave midshipman, holding at bay

our terrific-looking Indian chiefs, or something of the kind.

Qualifications being satisfactory, the next thing is to consider the advantages of the profession. These are several :—

(1) The cost of entering is not very great.
(2) The occupation is most healthy.
(3) Promotion, though slow, is sure.
(4) Opportunities occur for seeing the world.
(5) Pension for old age is assured.

The first step to be taken in order to enter as a naval cadet is to receive a nomination. This may be obtained from the First Lord of the Admiralty, a flag officer, a commodore in chief command of a station, and a captain who has been six months appointed. After obtaining a nomination, an examination has to be passed, consisting of a test examination and a competitive examination. They are held three times a year, in March, July, and December, at London and Portsmouth, and are conducted by the Civil Service Commissioners, Victoria Street, Westminster, S.W. The limits of age are fourteen to fifteen and a-half, and the examination fee is £1. To have a chance of success a boy must have had a good general education, such as he would receive at any public school. A knowledge of drawing is necessary.



By permission of *Navy and Army.*

MARINES ON THE DECK OF H.M.S. "TARTAR."

The examination consists of : (1) *Arithmetic*, up to simple interest ; (2) *Algebra*, up to quadrate equations ; (3) *Euclid*, Books I. to III. ; (4) *English*, including composition ; (5) *Latin* and *French*, translation and grammar ; (6) *English History* ; (7) *Geography* ; (8) *Drawing*, freehand and geometrical. And one of the following : *Mathematics*, including Elementary Trigonometry ; *Algebra* and *Euclid*, as named above, and first part of Book VI., with easy riders ; *German* ; *Mechanics* or *Chemistry*.

Two trials are allowed for this examination, but in the case of a second trial a second nomination must be obtained.

The competition for the Navy is very severe. There are about 40,000 applicants every year for about 5,000 vacancies. Only the best, mentally and physically, are accepted.

Privileged Cadetships.

A few cadetships are given to the sons of officers of both Services who have been killed in action.

Applications concerning these should be made to the Military Secretary, Horse Guards, S.W. ; or to the Secretary of the Admiralty, Whitehall, S.W., for sons of former officers in the Army and Navy respectively.

A few cadetships are also given to the sons of Colonial and Indian Army officers, and application should be made to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Downing Street, S.W., and the Military Secretary, India Office, Pall Mall, S.W.

Candidates have, however, to enter for the first part, consisting of the first seven subjects, of the examination, and must obtain at least 40 per cent. marks in them.

The Training.

The successful candidate then proceeds to the *Britannia* training-ship at Dartmouth, where he remains for two years, and receives training in the theory and practice of his profession. He must also pass a satisfactory examination on the subjects of instruction at the end of each term. If he fails to obtain the minimum number of marks, or if he is twice reported to the Admiralty for bad conduct, he will be ordered to be removed.

A cadet receives no pay during his two year's probation, and fees amounting to £75 per year, besides allowance for washing and extras, must be paid. The *Britannia* will soon be a thing of the past, and boys will qualify for the Navy at the Royal Britannia Naval College at Dartmouth.

On the completion of his training, a cadet will be appointed to a ship as a midshipman, and the steps up the ladder are as follows :—

Midshipman, receiving £32 per annum.

By permission of "Navy and Army."

SHIP'S COMPANY OF H.M.S. "TARTAR."

Sub-Lieutenant, receiving £91 per annum.

Lieutenant (with an allowance for navigating duties of £45), receiving £182 to £256 per annum, with extras.

Commander, receiving £365 per annum, with extras.

Captain, receiving £410 to £602 per annum.

From captain, the higher ranks to which, by hard work, good fortune, and influence, he may attain, are rear-admiral, vice-admiral, and admiral.

It will thus be seen that, not only during his training, but at any rate right up to the time when he has received the commission of lieutenant, an officer in the Navy requires some allowance besides his pay. Parents should bear this fact in mind when deciding upon the profession for their sons.

The cost of a cadet's outfit is £50.

Of course, promotion is slow in the Navy, especially in the upper grades. Influence comes in here as in every profession. To reach the rank of "commander" is comparatively easy, but after that promotion is very hard to get, and many men find themselves shelved upon half-pay at this period. Pensions vary according to years of service and rank attained.

An officer, being a captain, commander, or lieutenant, who retires between the ages of forty and sixty years receives a pension from £200 to £600 per annum. There are also good service pensions of £100 a year given to deserving officers in addition to their pay.

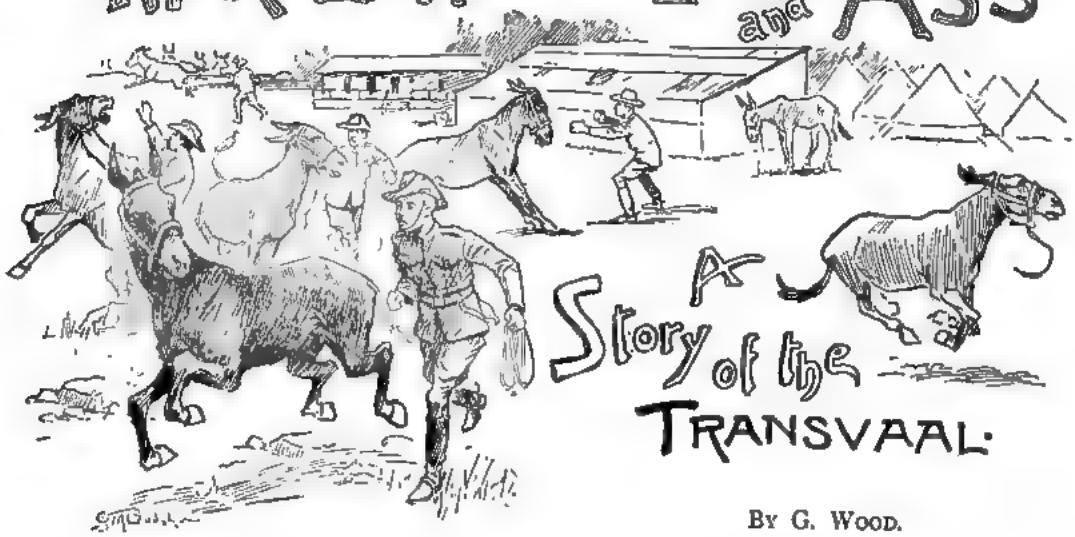
Youths may enter the Navy as naval cadets; as engineer students, for service afloat as engineer officers; as students in naval construction for joining the Royal Corps of Naval Constructors; as accountant officer, and through the Marines.

Space has only allowed me to touch upon the first-named branch of the Service, but in my next article I hope to touch upon the Engineer, Construction, and Marine Branches of the Royal Navy.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Agriculture.—See THE CAPTAIN for September, 1899. **Anxious.**—Consult our advertisement pages. **Doubtful.**—Strongly advise you to buy Volumes I. and II. of THE CAPTAIN. You will find all you want in them. **R. S. R.**—I gave full particulars in my article in the March number of THE CAPTAIN. Order it from your newsagent or send direct to the publishers. **A. R. H.**—I strongly advise the West India Regiment. **H. R.**—Unless your father is exclusively employed with a regularly enrolled regiment he would be regarded as a private gentleman, and no difference would be made. **Jamie and Others.**—Many thanks for your kind expressions. It is probable that my articles will be published in book form, but not just yet. **"Semper Fidelis."**—I will keep your letter by me. For your second question see the March number of THE CAPTAIN. **S. W. B.**—Write to the Emigrants' Information Office, 31, Broadway, Westminster, S.W. **E. N.**—A course of training at Kensington would be excellent. In the meantime, if your son can obtain practical knowledge in some workshop it will be good for him. **Architect.**—Write to the secretary of the Institute, Conduit Street, W., for a printed form, which, when filled up, must be accompanied by a fee of two guineas. **Anxious Father.**—I am very glad to have been able to assist you. Always pleased to hear from you. I should not worry about the fact you mention. Your son is still very young, and time will probably remedy it. **E. N.**—The initial training for all branches of engineering is the same. See THE CAPTAIN, May, 1899. **R. W.**—An introduction from one or more of the directors is absolutely necessary. **F. W.**—It would be very good indeed if you could go to the Hollesley Bay Colonial College for a year or two previous to going out to one of our colonies. **Paterfamilias.**—It would be wise when paying a premium to insist on a stipulation for the return of a portion of it in the event of the death or bankruptcy of the master. **Railway.**—Some of the great railway companies, such as the Great Western and London and North Western, take apprentices, the total premium in the former case being £75 spread over three years, and in the latter case £60 in one payment. In some cases the whole or part of the premium is returned in wages. The premium insures the firm against loss if the youth does not work well.

Thirteen Mules and an Ass.



A Story of the Transvaal.

By G. Wood.

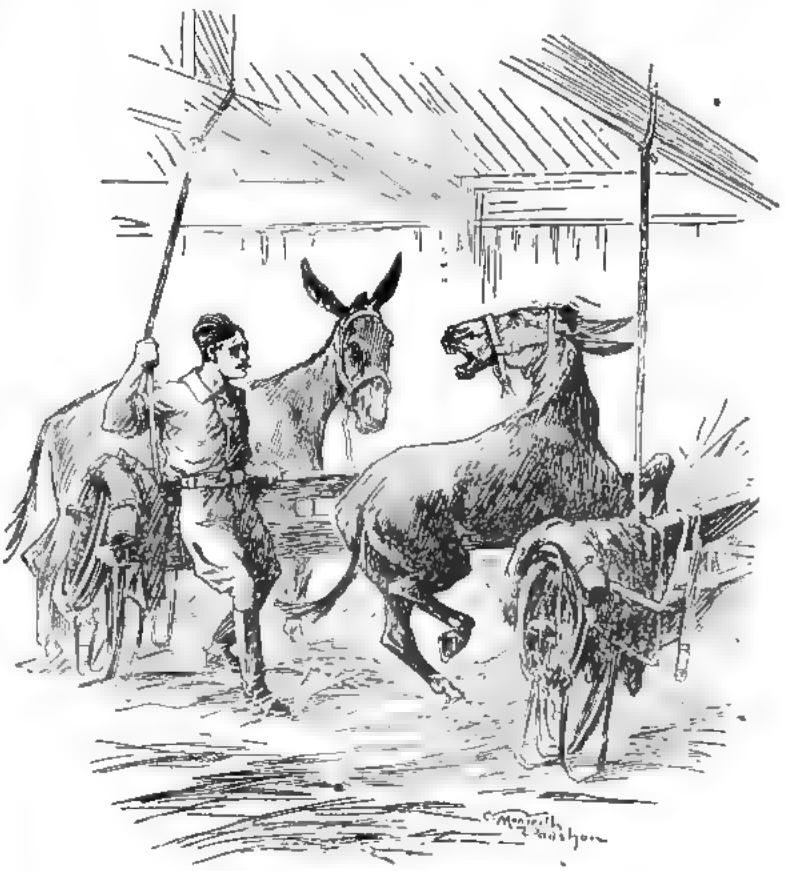
Sketches by Dodshon.

It was *àpropos* of the stampeding mules that he told us this story. For his veracity I can vouch as for my own, but I cannot hope to give his exact words, and I must necessarily omit from ignorance some local colouring and some minor details. After going down from Cambridge he had been abroad, I knew, but it was not until his return that we heard definitely where he had been, or what he had been doing. He told us of his wanderings in the Cape; of the many and various jobs to which he had turned his hand, of long hours endured under a broiling sun, while he had sat on a paraffin tin, with a loaded revolver on his knees, watching the convicts at work. This had been at Kimberley, and many were the stories he had of the celebrities there—Barney Barnato, Rhodes, and others. Then came experiences in the Bechuanaland Mounted Police, when he had lived almost entirely out in the open—the veldt—under canvas, had been bushed, and had come on one occasion very near dying of thirst, lost in the bush, with one companion.

"We were," he said, "up country when what I'm telling you happened. There had been some difficulty about the transport of our guns—we had a couple of little screw guns mounted for field use—and the horses used to drag them about were always going wrong and getting crocked in some way or other, so the authorities decided to turn them into a mule battery. There was great excitement in camp the night the mules came up—thirteen of them. There are mule farms, you know, and they just drive out the first lot that comes handy and send them straight off, unbroken generally, with an old one as leader; of our lot, twelve were absolutely unbroken, but the other one, the leader, probably came out of Noah's Ark. I never saw such a decrepit old beast, all mangy and moth-eaten, and without a kick left in him. I was out of camp when they came up, but I heard all about them from the others. The first thing they'd done was to stampede on their own, and break away into the bush; it took nearly all our men till dark to drive them in again.

"The next day, as luck had it, I was private on stable duty—oh, yes, I used my own name out there; nearly all the men in our company were gentlemen, and several were 'varsity men whom I'd known in the old time. A man named Jinks—Lieutenant Jinks— was orderly officer, and what it pretty well came to that day was, that Jinks and I and the mules were the only living things left in camp. Jinks hadn't seen the mules come up the night before, and didn't seem to have heard anything about them.

I'd got through all the ordinary work, and was beginning to thank my stars that Jinks had forgotten the mules, when he suddenly remembered, and asked if they had been watered. I knew what awful brutes they were, so I said I was certain they had been. This didn't satisfy Jinks, however, and he told me to get them out and water them again to make sure. I knew I couldn't do it alone and I told him so, and told him also how it had taken the whole company to get them into stables. I don't believe he'd ever seen a mule before; anyhow he slanged me, and told me pretty sharp to bring 'em out. He went off and stood by the watering tanks, quite cool and comfortable, while I sneaked off to the mules' stables, fairly sweating, and thinking of the words that would be spoken when the men came in and found they'd got to go into the bush after the brutes again. They seemed full of spirits, those mules; I had a look at the first, and tried to get to him, but the brute just laid back his ears and let fly at me with all four legs at once. I've never seen finer high-kicking. The second one went for me with open mouth, so I left him alone. But, the deuce of it was, that each was as bad or worse than the other, until I got to the thirteenth, the decrepit old beast that had led them up. Anyway, I thought I might as well make a start, so I sort of whistled this one out of his stall, and it came more like a lamb than a self-respecting mule. The beast drank like blazes—and no wonder, after their march up and ballyragging around the night before. Jinks was triumphant: 'Hasn't been watered for a week,' he said; 'hurry up with the rest.' I took the old 'un back again and tried to bring out another; but I can tell you I was pretty thankful to get all of myself out of his stall again, let alone the mule. I felt bunkered, and I could hear Jinks cursing in the distance because I was so slow. Then a happy thought struck me; I wiped old thirteenth's mouth with my forage cap, and took him out again. Jinks didn't seem to notice anything, and the mule could still do a pretty good drink. And so, to cut it short, I took that old mule out thirteen times, wiping his mouth each time, re-arranging his hoary locks, and throwing a cloth over him after a bit, just to hide the ravages of the moths. After the third time he couldn't hold any more drink; about the sixth the sight of water seemed to sicken him a bit, and at the tenth I believe he'd have kicked, if he'd had a kick in him. When Jinks saw that the mules didn't seem to want water, he hurried through the rest as quick as he could, more for form's sake than anything.



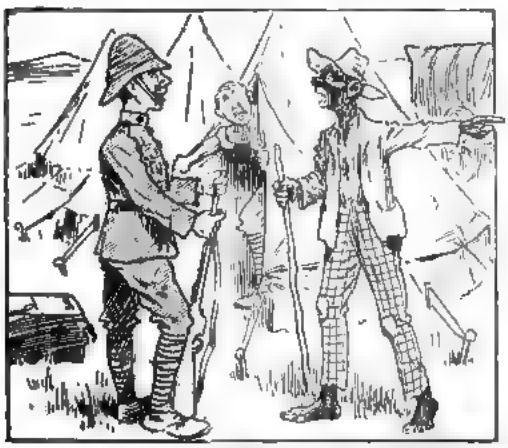
THE SECOND ONE WENT FOR ME WITH OPEN MOUTH.

"At officers' mess that night I heard that some of 'em had been asking after the mules, and that young Jinks had bucked a bit about the ease with which he'd had 'em watered. Some of the seniors had seemed to think it odd, and had betted Jinks that he'd been had on somehow.

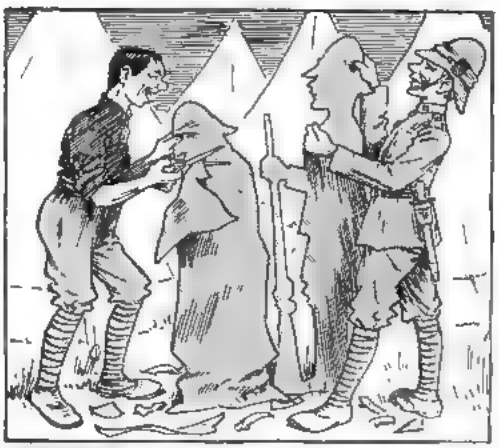
"The next day Jinks was on duty again, but I wasn't. H—— was on duty in my place. They had a glorious time. H—— had really tried to water the mules, and after most of them had broken loose and got into the bush, and both H—— and Jinks had been badly kicked, Jinks lost his temper altogether and slanged poor old H—— up hill and down dale for not being able to water them.

"Jinks got awfully rotted in officers' mess that night, and they sent for me to settle the question of the bet. It was no good holding up, so I told 'em how I'd managed, and they sat and roared and roared, all except Jinks, who had to pay up. After that he was always trying to get his knife into me; but it didn't matter, as I didn't stay long, and he was such a thundering ass, you could always score off him somehow."

HOW PRIVATES SMART AND SHARP FRIGHTENED THE BOERS.



(1) Privates Smart and Sharp were left in sole charge of the small camp of the Royal Engineers. Towards evening a Kaffir came in with the alarming news that a strong detachment of the enemy intended to make a night attack and capture the stores!



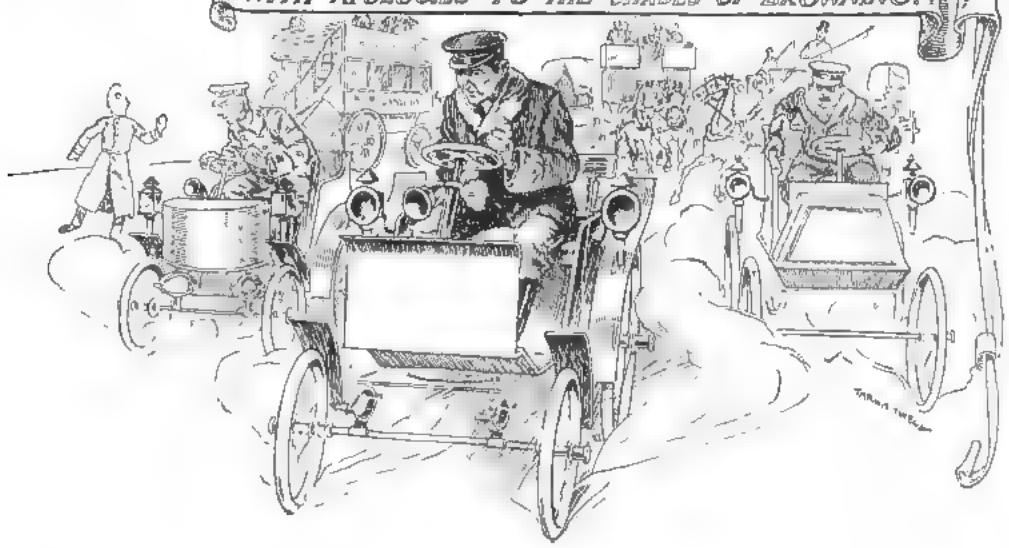
(2) Fortunately, however, Sharp was a soldier of resource; and later in the evening he and his chum might have been seen cutting out paper figures of soldiers, which they afterwards hung up in the tents, and, after arranging the electric light with which they were provided, patiently awaited the approach of their foe.

(3) About midnight the Boers stealthily crept up. Then, just as they were going to pounce on what they thought was an easy prey, Sharp switched on the light, and the enemy, seeing the shadows of so many men, turned tail and fled, while the rapid fire from our heroes' magazines gave additional impetus to their flight.

NEW STYLE

HOW THEY BROUGHT THE GOOD NEWS.

WITH APOLOGIES TO THE SHADES OF BROWNING.

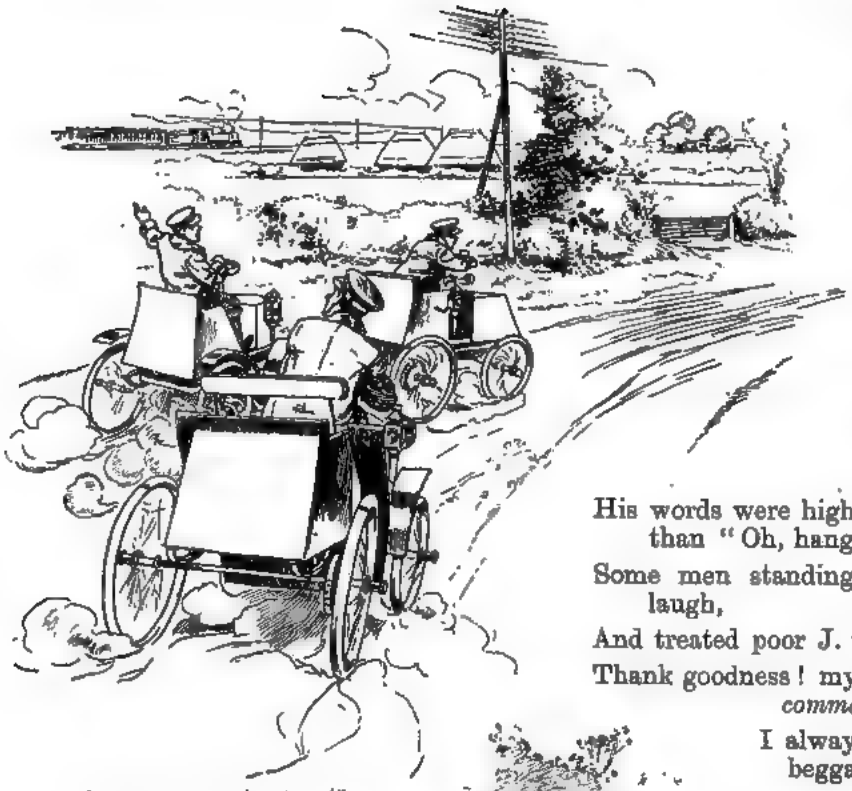


I SPRANG to my motor, and Joris, and D.,
I moted, D. moted, we moted all three:
And omnibus drivers, rude men, as we passed,
Cried "Stink-pots," while constables shouted "Too fast!"
But bless you, we all were as deaf as a post,
An affliction that comes—on occasions—to most.

We spake not a word, for we hadn't the breath;
Our speed was too great, and collision meant death:
But our nuts were adjusted, our tyres blown tight,
Our tanks reeked with petrol—now fairly alight—
The cylinders buzzed at a fabulous pace,
To tell you the figures I haven't the face.

'Twas twelve as we started at Hyde Park, and when
We bounded through Brentford, the clock showed twelve-ten:
At Colnbrook the folk left their houses in droves,
Said we smelt like ten thousands of Rippingile's stoves,
And other smart things; and I can't tell you how
We shattered the nerves of good people at Slough.

Now it chanced that there passed an express for the West—
We saw it; D. shouted: "Now lads, here's a test!"
We opened the throttles and leaped down the road,
Raising dust like a whirlwind, though many woa-woa'd;
The train fell behind us, a man fell before,
We rolled him, poor fellow, as flat as a floor.



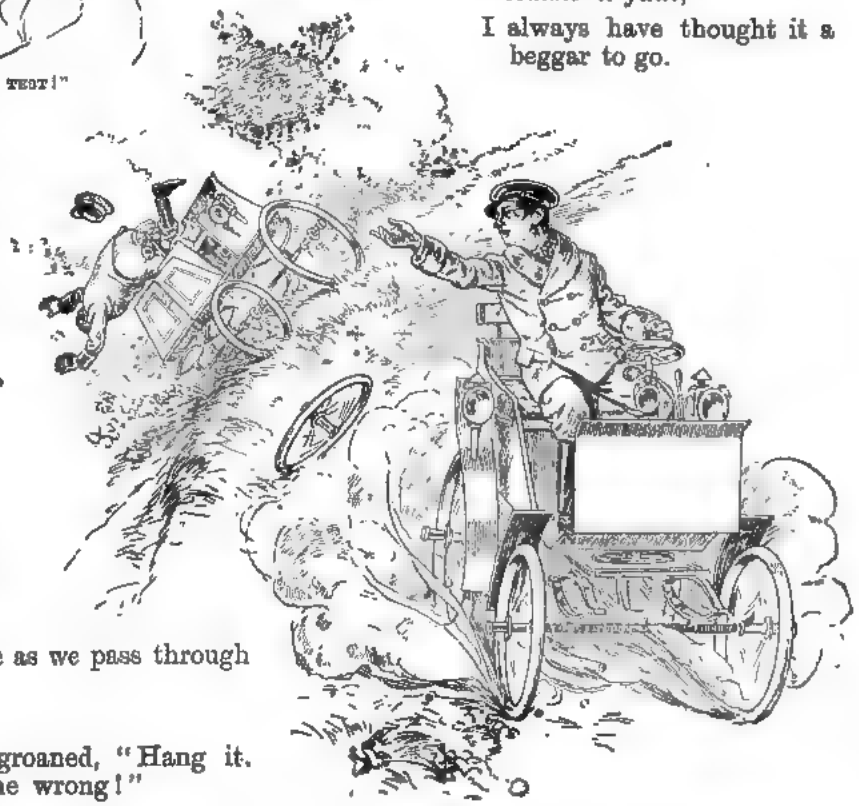
"NOW LADS, HERE'S A TEST!"

This reads a bit selfish, but then there's the law,
When you mote with big tidings, of *chacun pour soi.*
He soon lost a wheel I can't really say which,
And the other three landed the car in the ditch.

At Goring J's tyres went off with a bang,
His words were high-flavoured, far worse than "Oh, hang!"
Some men standing by gave a pitiless laugh,
And treated poor J. to a torrent of chaff.
Thank goodness! my steed was still quite *comme il faut,*
I always have thought it a beggar to go.

To relate what next follows my memory fails,
But I *think* we upset a red cart with the mails:
And then right in front of us Reading we see,
With its factory chimneys as plain as could be:
"Seeds and biscuits!" cried Joris, "we'd better slow down,
To about twenty-five as we pass through the town!"

At Tilehurst Dick groaned, "Hang it, something's gone wrong!"
I said, "I can't stop, very sorry, so long."



LANDED THE CAR IN THE DITCH.

It may be that something went wrong
with my brain,
My conduct, at least, looks a little insane:

"IN FACT, I HURLED EVERYTHING OUT BUT MYSELF."

I screamed, and I shouted, "I'm sent
by the Queen,
To water the roads and to keep them quite
clean;
She follows behind me, *en route* for the
North:
If you stop me you'll feel the extent of
her wrath."

Then I cast loose my cap, and my coat
trimmed with fur,
They both are the pride of the model
chauffeur;
I moulted my boots, threw them over the
side,
With a basket of luncheon not even un-
tied;
My keys and my watch, and my purse—
useless pelf—
In fact, I hurled everything out but my-
self.

Many horsemen now gather and ride on
my track,
Like hunger-pressed wolves hunting food in a pack:
But Oxford's in front and they're falling behind,
So to slacken to please them I'm no way inclined;
To stop would mean capture, and capture means gaol,
For adopting the pace of the Limited Mail.

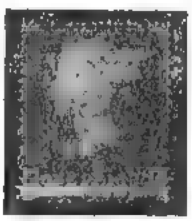
The speed grew terrific, red-
hot grew the wheels,
The gearing emitted most ter-
rible squeals:
Through Cowley I flashed, and
was soon in the "High,"
Where the undergrads. yelled, "That *is*
scorching, my eye!"
I shouted the tidings—the last words I
spoke,
For I gave a great shudder, fell forward.
and—woke.

A. WILLIAMS.

[I have read this poem carefully, but have been unable to discover *what* good news they brought: can any reader throw light on the subject?—THE O. F.]

A CHAT ON PERFORATIONS.

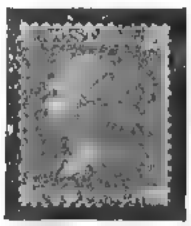
In Volume I., page 641, I gave an illustration of a perforation gauge, which I am glad to find has proved itself really useful to many readers. The directions given for using the gauge appear to have been explicit, as few queries have been raised relative to the measurement of what may be termed simple, or, technically, machine perforations. By the way, many thousands, if not millions, of our current halfpenny and one penny postage labels are used every day, and probably only one in a hundred of those applying them to their letters know how the perforations are produced!


"PERF. 16."

In almost every country the first postage stamps were issued without any perforations, *i.e.*, *imperforate* (not *unperforated*, please!). The early 1d. black, 1d. red, and 2d. blue British stamps were so issued, and not until the authorities became aware of the great loss of time involved in severing the specimens with a pair of scissors was any inclination shown by them to introduce a new method of separation. In fact, had they been desirous of doing so, very little ground was present to work upon.

Mr. Henry Archer, an Irishman, invented in 1847 a method of perforating by a machine which applied a series of small "cuts" round the edges of each stamp. This new invention was submitted to the Lords of the Treasury, who authorised a trial of the machine to be made; finding, however, that the points soon wore down when the edges of the perforators were brought into contact with the table upon which the sheets of stamps rested. This perforation was known as "Archer's Roulette."

Later on, Mr. Archer improved on his invention, by a machine which carried a series of needles, capable of adjustment, and placed so that in a length of two centimetres (see note on page 641) there were sixteen distinct holes or perforations. This machine was purchased with the patent rights by the Government, and was used for perforating the early 1d. and 2d. stamps; the perforation being known as "perf. 16."

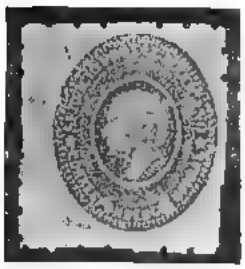

"PERF. 14."

Some time later, the needles in the perforating machines, which had been manufactured to order from Mr. Archer's original, were readjusted, so as to allow fourteen needles only to occupy the space of two centimetres, hence the term "perf. 14"—this perforation being used at the present time, as will be seen if a current English stamp of any value be examined, and the number of holes in a space of two centimetres counted. These will be found to number fourteen exactly.

As a rule this perforation, "14," is in general use; but other perforations can be found, such as "perf. 12," on certain stamps of St. Vincent.

Barbados, St. Lucia, and other British Colonies; while on the early stamps of France there is a very large perforation known as "*Susse*," which gauges seven holes only in the space of two centimetres; this is "perf. 7." All these are *machine* perforations, in measuring which it is usual to measure the horizontal (top or bottom) edges of the stamp first, and, subsequently, the vertical edges, or the sides. Thus we may have a *compound perforation—i.e.*, the top measuring twelve and a-half and the sides fourteen; this is known as "perf. 12½ by 14."

Other processes of perforation have been used in various countries, and I append a short description of those which young collectors are likely to meet with.



PIN PERFORATION.

Pin perforation is illustrated by the Mexican stamp, in which the needles are very wide apart; and, instead of punching out the holes, as in machine perforation, they merely prick them, like a pin. The variety is illustrated if a plain piece of paper be passed underneath the needle of a sewing machine without the thread-shuttle inserted.

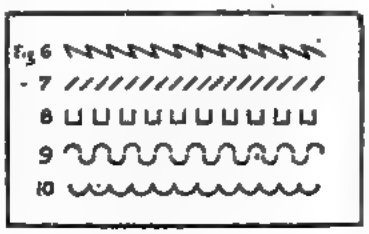
Roulette is illustrated by the Oldenburg stamp. This method of separation is still in use in Chile.

ROULETTE.

ARC ROULETTE.

Arc roulette is a close perforation, caused by the use of a semi-circular instrument, which, when passed between the stamps, leaves a mark; so that, when two stamps so treated are separated, one side shows a row of small scallops, the other the corresponding arches, or hollows, from which the scallops have been torn. (*See the Brunswick stamp.*)

The small square illustration (Figs. 6-10), shows five scarcer varieties of perforation, which it must be sufficient to mention only. Fig. 6 is termed "*saw roulette*," the cuts resembling the teeth of a saw. Fig. 7, "*oblique roulette*." Fig. 8, "*roulette in half-squares*" (see the early issues of Denmark). Fig. 9, "*serpentine roulette*" (as found on the early Finland stamps). Fig. 10, "*susse perforation*" (as already alluded to).

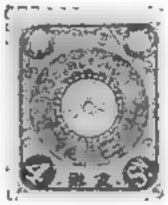


VARIETIES OF PERFORATION.

These remarks, necessarily condensed, will, I trust, prove useful to young collectors, to whom, frequently, perforations are a *bête noire!*

NEW ISSUES.

JAPANESE CHINA. — The entire series of stamps which I chronicled recently have been surcharged at the base with two small characters (see illustration) signifying "China." The stamps so surcharged are for use in the Japanese post offices in China.



JAPANESE CHINA.

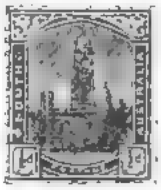
MAURITIUS. — The accompanying illustration depicts a stamp which has been issued in Mauritius to commemorate Labourdonnais. Apparently this gentleman, whose portrait figures in the centre, did more to injure British interests in Asiatic waters than anyone, but becoming Governor of Mauritius when it was under French rule, Pierre de Labourdonnais introduced the sugar-cane into the island and thus immortalised his name. The colour is a washy blue, presumably ultramarine.

MAURITIUS.

NICARAGUA.—Messrs. Whitfield King & Co. have sent me a series of new stamps, the annual crop—the design of the new stamps as illustrated being rather pretty. The values extend from 1c. to 5pesos, and there are the full complement of unpaid letter and official stamps.

NICARAGUA.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA. —Here is a pretty new ½d. stamp, showing a view of the post office at Adelaide. ½d green.

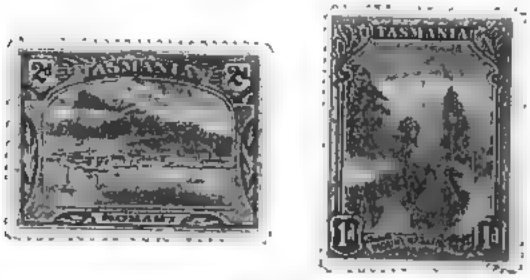


SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

SWEDEN.

SWEDEN.—A new 1 krona stamp is to hand from Messrs. Whitfield King & Co., which I illustrate. 1 krona, carmine and black.

TASMANIA.—Having read about the splendid new Tasmanian stamps, you will be wanting to see the designs. Here are two of them.



TASMANIA.

THE JUNIOR LONDON PHILATELIC SOCIETY.

Under this title, a new society has been started in London for young stamp-collectors and beginners. The secretary is Mr. J. B. Melville, 16, Lydon Road, Clapham, S.W.

The circular announcing this new society states that among the methods for introducing new members will be free lectures on "Stamp Collecting: An Introduction to the Hobby," illustrated by lantern views. The tickets for these lectures will be sent to the schools in various districts, and the head master will be asked to present them to all the stamp collectors in his school.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

A. J. Murnaghan writes to know if I will start a club for readers of "The Stamp Collector." What do other readers say?

$C_3H_5(NO_3)_3O$, or Lyddite.—You deserve to be blown up with your *nom de plume*. I insert it as a warning to others. You will find the names of several exchange clubs in back numbers of THE CAPTAIN.

"Lancashire Lad" is a lucky lad. A friend, selling a lot of his father's old stamps, offered him several at a uniform price of ½d. each. Among them was a 30c. United States 1869 issue. The value of this stamp is 10s.

Newfoundland.—(1) "The Imperial," published by Messrs. Stanley Gibbons, Ltd., 391, Strand, W.C., price 19s., in 2 vols. Mention THE CAPTAIN. (2) The mounts I use are those manufactured by Messrs. Whitfield King & Co., whose advertisement appears elsewhere. (3) I cannot fix the value of a "pigeongram" stamp on original.

A. A. Pit is another of the Colonial contingent who receives THE CAPTAIN. This correspondent sends me the new Cape stamp, which is illustrated elsewhere.

W. P. Maynard.—The stamp you send me is Alwar (or Ulwar), perfectly genuine, and a native state in India. Its value is 1d. Glad THE CAPTAIN penetrates to the Island of Montserrat.

G. H. Varley.—Thanks for the German stamp.

R. A. Eddy.—The supposed "error" in the 1c. Columbian United States stamp is well known. As every copy is so lettered, it can scarcely be termed an error. The complete set, with the dollar values, is worth about £3.

W. L. Brodie and **L. L.**—Many thanks for your kind communications.

R. Ll. Hartley.—(1) For the best stamp album for British and British Colonial stamps alone, see answer as given to "Newfoundland." (2) From the same source. (3) Printed titles for a blank album can be obtained from most dealers. (4) The value of a ½c. Canada jubilee stamp, used, is 1s. (5) Ceylon, 6d. brown, first issue, used, is worth 15s. (6) The difference between ultramarine and blue is explained by comparing a 1c. Columbus United States stamp with a 4c. value of the same issue. The former is blue, the latter ultramarine.

E. A. (HULL.)—Have marked your stamps.

Pesquisidor.—(1) The letters "T.S." form part of the paper-maker's name, and are not the water-mark. Value 2d. (2) Certainly C.C. or C.A. makes a difference. You need a catalogue. Get Messrs. Bright & Sons' "A.B.C."—this gives you water-marks; also the "Universal," as advertised (Messrs. Whitfield King & Co.). (3) Djibouti, 1894, 25c. and 50c., used, are worth 5d. and 6d. respectively. (4) Yes. Austria has a new issue—see elsewhere. (5) The 2d. violet S. Australia stamp is also a new issue. (6) Certainly—see catalogue.

Cloudesdale.—French morocco.

Ivanhoe.—(1) The "Postal Service" stamps of India are not used for postage. I therefore cannot speak of the value of an unused set. (2) Your second query is not in my department, but I will answer it. The smallest size camera of the make you mention is £2 18s. 6d.

A. L. Fereday.—Many thanks for your letter. The philatelic market does not admit of periodical fluctuations, and you will find the latest catalogue gives 4s. 6d. All the same, I believe you are correct.

C. R. Start writes me, pointing out that the current German stamps have not, as I suggested, been surcharged "Samoach." The report arose from a little joke played by the Berlin Philatelic Society on the occasion of a recent meeting. One hundred of the current 3pf. stamps were issued to the members, surcharged in this manner, of course as a joke.

T. C. Judson.—The complete set of Greek "Olympian" stamps is worth about 20s. unused, slightly less used.

E. O. T.—Ceylon 6c. on 15c. is worth 2d.

SYNOPSIS.—(CHAPTERS I.—IV.)

The tale is related by Carr, captain of St. Amory's School. Acton, a fifth-form boy, and a brilliant full-back, is seen by Bourne (the "footer" captain) and Carr to deliberately trip one of the opposing team. On this account Bourne refuses to give him his colours. Thus the feud begins. As the matter of the "foul" (for the school's credit), is kept quiet by those who witnessed it, the school in general supposes that Acton is denied his "cap" on account of the existence of a private quarrel between himself and Bourne, who promptly becomes exceedingly unpopular. Acton, posing as a martyr, seizes the opportunity to win the goodwill of St. Amory's in every possible way, and as a beginning starts regenerating his house—"Biffen's," hitherto the slackest, both in school and out of it.

CHAPTER V.

COTTON AND HIS JACKAL.

As I said before, the victory of the despised Biffenites over the Fifth Form eleven—a moderate one, it is true—caused quite a little breeze of surprise to circulate around the other houses, which had by process of time come to regard that slack house as hopeless in the fields or in the schools. Over all the tea-tables that afternoon the news was commented on with full details; how Chalmers had gained in deadliness just as much as he had lost in selfishness, and how Raven and Worcester had worked like horses, and mown down the opposition—"Fifth Form opposition!" said the fags, with a lift of the eyebrows—like grass, and as for Biffen's new captain, well, if there was one player who could hold a candle to him it must be Phil Bourne, and he only.

In the Rev. E. Taylor's house, Cotton senior, who answered to the name of "Jim" among his familiars, and was "Bully Cotton" to his enemies—every Amorian below the Fifth, and a good sprinkling elsewhere—and Augustus Vernon Robert Todd, who was "Gus" to everyone, sat at tea together in Todd's room. Cotton had been one of the slain that afternoon on the Acres, and was still in his footer clothes, plus a sweater, which almost came up to his ears. There was a bright fire in the grate, and though Todd's room was not decorative compared with most of the other fellows' dens, yet it was cheerful enough. Cotton had come back from the match hungry and a trifle bruised from a smart upset, only to find his own fire out, and preparations for tea invisible. Having uttered dire threats against his absent, erring fag, he moved into his friend's room, and the two clubbed together their resources, and the result was a square meal, towards which Cotton contributed something like 19/20, A.V.R. Todd's share being limited to the kettle, the water, and the fire. When Cotton had satisfied his footer appetite, he turned down his stocking and proceeded vigorously to anoint with embrocation his damaged leg, the pungent scent of the liniment being almost ornamental in its strength.

"How did you get that, Jim?" said Gus, surveying the brawny limb with interest.

"Acton brought me down like a house, my boy."

"Fair?"

"Oh, yes; but you've got to go down if he catches you in his swing."

"You fellows must have played beautifully to let Biffen's mob maul you to that extent."

"Gus, my boy, instead of frowsing up here all the afternoon with your books, you should have been on the touch-line watching those Biffenites at their new tricks. Your opinion then would have a little avoirdupois. As it is, you Perry Exhibit, it is worth exactly nothing."

"You're deucedly classical to-night, Jim."

"Oh, I'm sick of this forsaken match and all the compliments we've had over it. I'm going now to have a tub, and then we'll get that Latin paper through, and, thirdly, I'll have the chessmen out."

"Sorry, I can't, Jim," said Todd discontentedly. "There is that beastly Perry Scholarship—I must really do something for that!"

"Thomas Rot, Esq.!" said Cotton. "Haven't you been a-cramming and a-guzzling for that all this afternoon? You've a duty towards your chums, Toddy, so I tell you."

"That's all very well, Jim, for you, who are going to break some crammer's heart, and then crawl into the Army through the Militia, but my pater wants me to do something in the Perry, I tell you."

"Chess!" said Cotton, disregarding Todd's bleat, and then, with a sly smile, he added, "Shilling a game, Gus, and you know you always pull off the odd one."

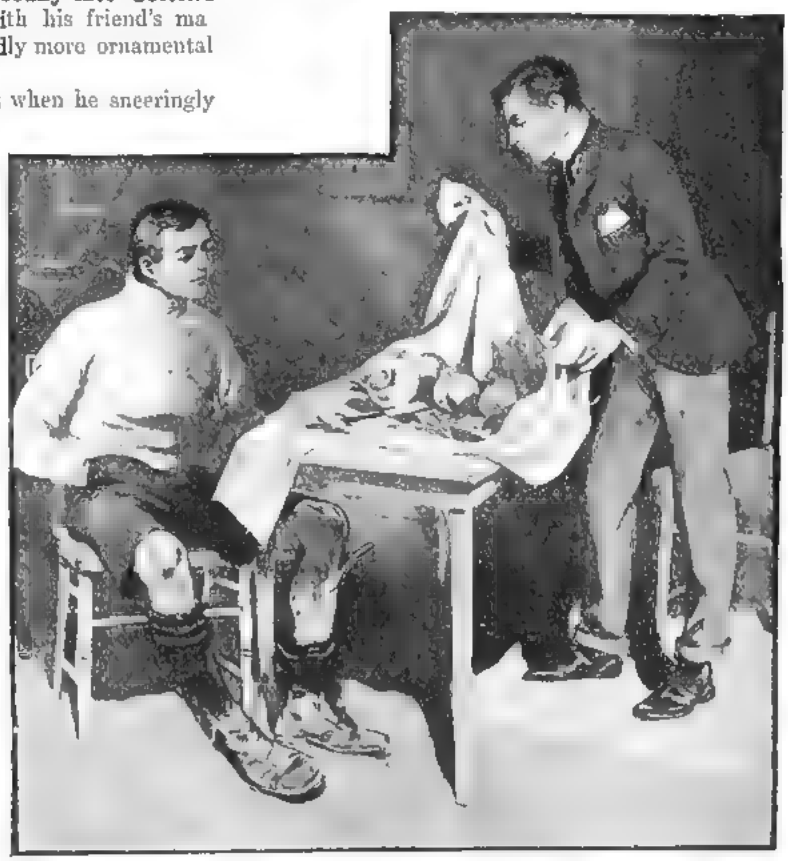
"All right," said Todd, swallowing the bait with forlorn eagerness, "I'll have the board set out if you must come in."

"Oh, I must!" said Cotton, with a half-sneer at Todd's anxiety to pick up such a small sum. "Clear the table and we'll make a snug evening of it."

Todd's method of clearing a table was novel, if not original. He carried it bodily into Cotton's room, and then returned with his friend's mahogany, which was undoubtedly more ornamental than his own.

Acton was absolutely right when he sneeringly called Gus "Cotton's jackal." Todd was exactly of the material which makes a good jackal, though he never became quite Jim Cotton's toady. He was a sharp, selfish individual, good-looking in an aimless kind of way, with a slack, feeble mouth, and a wandering, indecisive glance. He had a quick, shallow cleverness, which could get up pretty easily enough of inexact knowledge to pass muster in the schools. Old Corker knew his capabilities to a hair, and would now and then, when Gus offered up some hazy, specious guess-work, blister him with a little biting sarcasm. Todd feared the Doctor as he feared no one else. Todd's chief private moan was that he never had any money. His father was a rich man; but had some ideas which were rather rough on his weak-kneed son. He tipped poor Gus as though he were some thrifty hairdresser's son, and Todd had to try to ruffle it with young Amorians on as many shillings as they had crowns. Not a lad who ever had naturally any large amount of self-respect, the little he had soon went, and he became, while still a fag, a hewer of wood and drawer of water to his better-tipped cronies. His destiny finished when, on his entry into the Fifth, Jim Cotton claimed him, and subsidised him as his man.

At the beginning of the term his father had told him that if he could make a good show in the Perry Exhibition there need not be any more grumbling about his tip. Gus came back to St. Amory's hysterically anxious to cut out all competitors for the Perry, but the shackles of his old serfdom were still about him. When he showed signs of being restive to the old claims, and recommended Cotton to do his own classics and mathematics, Cotton coolly and calmly demanded repayment of sundry loans contracted of old. Todd had not the pluck to face a term of



TODD'S METHOD OF CLEARING A TABLE WAS NOVEL, IF NOT ORIGINAL.

plain living and high thinking by paying his former patron all he owed him and exhausting all his present tip by so doing, but flabbily, though discontentedly, caved in, and became Cotton's jackal as before.

Cotton was by no means as bad as his endearing name might make you think. He was a tall, heavy fellow, with a large, determined-looking face. He was wonderfully stupid in the schools, but was quite clever enough to know it. He had some good qualities. He was straight enough in all extra-school affairs, did not lie, nor fear any one; kept his word, and expected you to keep yours.

"You can't beat Hodgson of the Sixth, Gus, so what is the good of sweating all the term? Hodgson's got the deuce of a pull over you to start with."

"I'm not frightened of Hodgson if you wouldn't bother, Jim."

"Can't do without you, old cock. You're just the fellow to lift my Latin and those filthy mathematics high enough out of the mud to keep the beaks from worrying me to death. I tried Philips for a week, but he did such weird sereeds in the 'unseens' that Merishall smelt a rat, and was most particular attentive to me, but your leverage is just about my fighting weight."

Gus had sniffed discontentedly at this dubious compliment; but Cotton had smiled stolidly, and continued to use Gus as his classical and mathematical hack. Besides, there was something about Gus's easy-going lackadaisical temperament which exactly suited Cotton, and he felt for his grumbling jackal a friendliness apart from Gus's usefulness to him.

This afternoon had been a fair sample of Todd's usual half-holiday. Feeling no heart for any serious work for the Perry, he had spent it in reading half a worthless novel, and skimming through a magazine, and feeling muddled and discontented in consequence. He had the uneasy feeling that he was an arrant ass in thus fooling time away, but had not sufficient self-denial to seize upon a quiet afternoon for a little genuine work.

Cotton soon returned from his bath, and the two cronies spent about an hour in getting up the least modicum of their classics which would satisfy Merishall; and then they played chess, by which Gus was one florin richer. A third game was in progress, but Todd managed to tip over the board when he was "going to mate in five moves." Cotton thereupon said he had had enough, but Gus avariciously tried to reconstruct the positions. He failed dismally, and Cotton laughed sweetly. Now Cotton's laugh would almost make his chum's hair curl, so he retorted pretty sweetly himself, "I say, Jim. I can't get out of my head that awful hammering you fellows got this afternoon. Think Biffen's lot likely to shape well in the House matches!"

"There's no telling, old man. But if they get moderate luck they'll be waltzing about in the final."

"That's absolute blazing idiocy!" said Todd, knocking over more chessmen in his astonishment.

"All right, Gus. To talk absolute blazing idiocy is my usual habit, of course. They may carry off the final even, but that, perhaps, is a tall order."

Todd nursed his astonishment for a full five minutes, whistling occasionally, as at some very fantastic idea. At last he said more seriously: "Aren't you now, Jim, really pulling my leg?"

"No, honour bright! Biffen's are really eye-openers."

Gus said with infinite slyness: "Look here, I'll bet you evens Biffen's *don't* pull off the final."

"Oh, that is rot, Gus, to talk about betting, for you can't pay if you lose."

Gus had not too much sensitiveness in his character, but this unmeant insult stung him.

"You've no right to say that. I've paid all I've ever betted with you."

Cotton considered heavily in his own mind for a moment. "That is almost true, but——"

"Well what do you mean——" began Todd, in a paddy.

"All right," said Cotton; "shut up, confound you! I'll take you."

"Three quid Biffen's are not cock house at 'footer.'"

"Done," said Cotton, unwillingly pulling out his note-book, "and straight, Todd, I shall expect you to pay if you lose."

"Oh, shut up, Cotton, you cad! I shall pay if I lose, man. What do you want to keep on insulting me like that for?"

"Steady, Gus. You'll have Taylor up if you howl like that. I meant nothing."

"Nothing!" said Gus in a fury, seeking for something particularly sweet to say to his patron. "I jolly well hope, then, that if our house should meet 'em in the rounds you will do your little best to put a stopper on their career. Don't, for the sake of pulling off your bet, present 'em with a few goals. You '*keep*' for our house, you know."

"Oh, dash it all, Todd," said Cotton, in a white rage, "you are a bounder! Think I'd sell my side?" he demanded furiously.

"Ah!" said Gus, delighted at having got through Cotton's skin. "You don't stomach insults any more than I do. Then why do you ladle them out so jolly freely to me?"

"That was a particularly low one," said Cotton angrily; "and anyway, you avaricious beggar, you've got thundering good terms, for it is hardly likely that Biffen's can really be cock-house. There's Corker's house, with Bourne and Hodgson and a few more good men. You're a sight more likely to see my three sova. than I am yours."

"I hope so," said Gus, with some relief at the anticipation of this pleasant prospect.

Then the anger of the two simmered down, each having given and received some very choice compliments, and as these little breezes were usual between the two, ten minutes afterwards they were amiably entertaining each other. Cotton was putting up a pair of dumb-bells three hundred times, and his crony was counting and criticising his form. The Perry Exhibition did not enter Todd's head, but his bet—"such a gilt-edged one," he chuckled—was never once out of it. And Todd's bet had some momentous consequences for him, too.

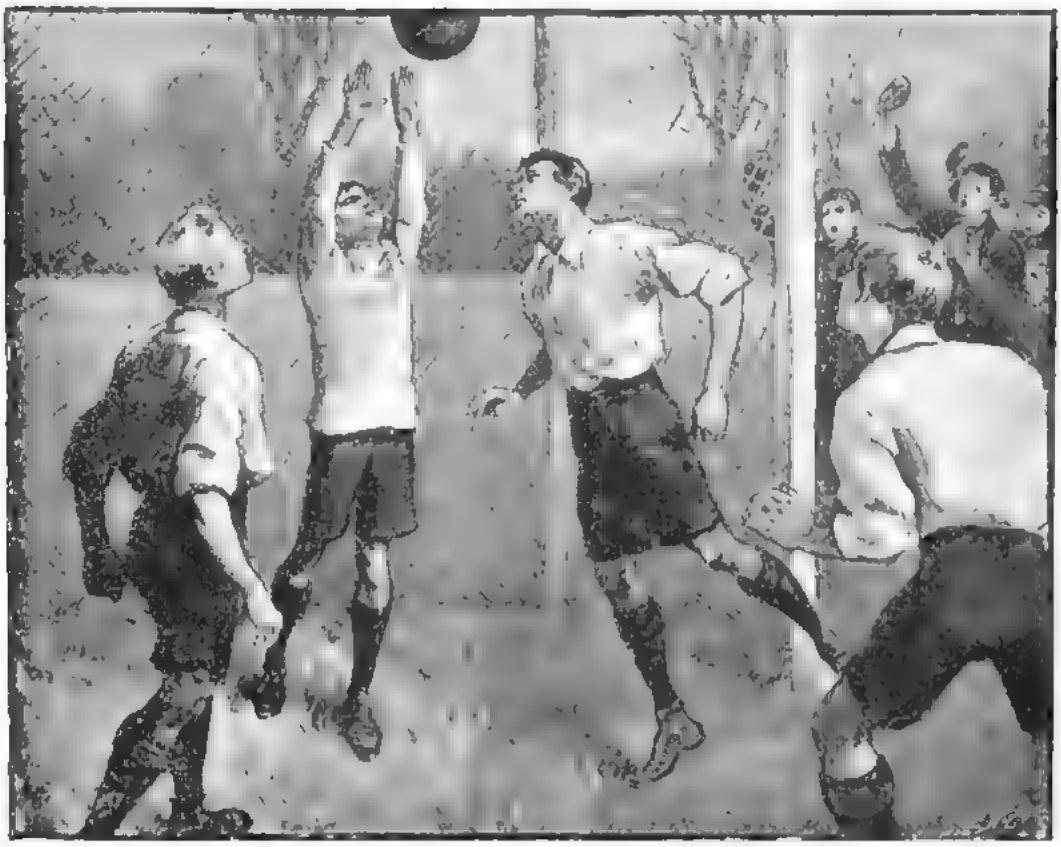
CHAPTER VI.

THANKS TO ACTON.

After the Carthusian match there was but one topic, or to be strictly accurate, perhaps, two topics of interest in the school—who would be cock-house at footer and who would get the Perry Exhibition.

The rest of the houses knew that Biffen's house was not now the unconsidered article it was once, that it wasn't the door-mat upon which anyone might wipe his feet before proceeding into the inner circles of the housers' competition, and there was more than a little curiosity to see how far the "resurrected" house would mount.

But not a single soul dreamt that it would reach the final. The whole school gasped for a fortnight on end as Biffen's annihilated Dover's, Hargen's, Sharpe's, and Merishall's *seriatim*, and at last faced Corker's house in the final. This was a resurrected house with a vengeance! Corker's had had a bye in the first round and had



ACTON JUST REACHED IT WITH HIS HEAD, AND DEFLECTED IT HIGH AND DRY OUT OF ROBERTS' REACH INTO THE NET.

been drawn against rather rickety houses since, but they were generally fancied to pull off the final as usual, for Bourne was captain, and they had Hodgson and Roberts of the eleven as well. The wonderful progress of Biffen's had thrown an awful lot of excitement into the game.

The match was fixed for the last Saturday in the term, and the result of the Perry Exhibition was to be announced on the evening of the same day, so the last Saturday was going to be the memorable day of the Michaelmas stretch.

If you want a full account of the match you had better write to the editor of *The Amorian*. He will send you the magazine with a page or so of description and account, but all I'm going to say is that Bourne and Acton played as they had never played before—I think I've said that before about Acton, but he really was superlative in the housers' final—and that five minutes from time the score was "one all." Then Acton showed the school a stroke of genius. He brought Raven out from centre-forward, where he was quite unable to cope with Bourne, whispered him to go "back" with Worcester, and before anyone could realise what was happening he was playing forward himself. He was a "lambent" flame along the ground if you like. In a second Biffen's were swarming round Roberts in goal, Acton passed out to Chalmers, who was ready for the pass, and in a twinkling the ball was in the net. From the row you might have imagined the school had gone mad.

The ball was kicked off again. Almost immediately Acton secured near the centre. He dribbled through the ruck of his opponents until he saw Bourne upon him. With a smile of triumph upon his lips he gently rolled the leather to Chalmers, who was hungrily waiting for the pass out on the touch-line. Chalmers waltzed beautifully for the short run almost to the corner flag. He steadied himself for one instant after his run, and then lifted the ball magnificently into the goal mouth. As the leather was skimming past, Acton just reached it with his head and deflected it high and dry out of Roberts' reach into the net. It was the supreme effort of his splendid game.

Biffen's had won by three goals to one!

They carried Acton off the field in ecstasy, and nearly scared Dame Biffen out of her wits by the "whisper" of "cock-house." Well, it certainly was unusual.

After tea the whole of St. Amory's crowded into the Speech Room to hear the result of the Perry Exhibition. There would not be a fellow away I should fancy, bar the cripples in the hospital, for there was no end of excitement. Was this to be another Biffen's triumph? Was Raven of the Fifth to beat Hodgson, the chosen of the Sixth, for the Perry? It was not to be expected that he would, but when the whisper circled round that Acton had "coached" him in classics it was agreed that perhaps there would be another feather in Acton's cap.

The masters were there on the platform in serried ranks, the whole fifty of them, from Corker to Pfenning who "does" the music.

Corker, as usual, went straight to the mark, whilst the entire mass of fellows kept a death-like silence. "The result of the examination for the Perry Exhibition is as follows:—

1st. Arthur Raven, 672 marks.
2nd. Theodore Hodgson, 591 marks.
3rd. Augustus Vernon Robert Todd, 114 marks."

Then out broke the usual uproar, "shivering the silence," as someone says, "into clamour." We all cheered for Raven, who scored a popular and unexpected victory, for why should a Fifth Form fellow beat one of the Sixth? Biffen's crowd kept up the cheering until Corker rose again.

"I can heartily congratulate Raven on his success, for his classical knowledge was distinctly good. Hodgson I can also congratulate, for his papers too were good. As for Augustus Vernon Robert Todd"—we all yelled with laughter as Dr. Moore scrambled in hot haste through Todd's awful list of names, but were again quiet when he dropped his eye-glasses from his eagle's beak, a sure sign he was going to "savage" somebody—"as for *his* performance in this examination, I can only regard it as a very bad practical joke, or as his *ballon d'essai* for some kindergarten scholarship."

Raven got up from his seat near the door. He was pale to the lips, but his voice was clear and unhesitating. "If you please, sir, may I say a word?"

"Eh, what?" said Corker. "Say a word? Oh, certainly."

"I am very glad indeed to hear that I have won the Perry Exhibition. I know in my own mind that I could never have beaten my friend Hodgson if I had not had Acton's help. I owe the winning of the Exhibition entirely to him, for he has read the whole of the classics with me and helped me in every way in his power. I cannot thank him enough for all he has done, but at least I owe him this open acknowledgment."

Corker looked no end pleased, and turned round and beamed on Biffen, whose good-natured easy face shone with pleasure and delight.

"Biffen," said good old Corker, audibly, "your house is fortunate in having Acton, and St. Amory such a good amateur coach in classics. Cock house, too, bless me!"

And can you wonder that Biffen's, frenzied with

delight, carried Raven and Acton shoulder high through the gas-lit streets?

Whilst the Biffenites were thus shouting their way home, one unhappy youth hurried to his room feeling as though the moon had fallen out of heaven and crushed him—Todd. After that night when he had made the bet with Cotton, he had neither worked for the Perry nor yet left it alone, but loafed about with Cotton as usual, and piffled with the work for the Exhibition. As a last-lap spurt, he had, in the last week or so, desperately stuffed himself with cunning tips leading twistingly to nowhere. Never had anyone faced a serious examination with such a rag-bag of tips as Todd, and the examination had found him out with a vengence. As he slunk along to his quarters, Corker's words were buzzing in his ears unendingly. "As for Augustus Vernon Robert Todd"—"*ballon d'essai*"—"Kindergarten!" Oh! it was a sickener, and how the fellows had laughed!

As for his bet with Cotton about cock-house, why he had, when he saw those goals put on at the last moment, felt a cold shiver run down his back. He had crawled off the Acres a sick and sorry and miserable wretch. Cotton had, being rather riled at his chum's temper for the last month, hinted, in unmistakable terms, that the debt was to be paid on return after holidays. Todd contemplated the ravishing prospect of the future with unmixed feelings. Between the upper and nether millstones of the lost Exhibition and the lost bet he had been crushed, annihilated!

When he had shut the study door, in sheer despair of spirit, he laid his head on the table and—— Well, did he blub? All I know is, the Rev. E. Taylor knocked at the door once, twice, thrice, and Todd heard him not. The house master came in and surveyed the bowed form of poor Gus with a good-natured smile, tempered with some scorn. He took the liberty of loudly poking Gus's decaying fire, whereat the young gentleman sprang up instanter.

"I knocked, Todd, but I suppose you were thinking too deeply to hear me."

"Sorry, sir," said Gus, hurriedly getting the master a chair, "and, as a matter of fact, I was thinking."

"Yes?"

"What an awful ass I've been, sir."

"I don't know quite about the ass, but you've certainly not been an epitome of all that's wise this term. It was on that very subject that I came here to have a word with you before we go for the holidays."

Gus looked blankly into the grate.

"This exhibition of yours, Todd, in the examination is just the answer you might expect to the problem you've set yourself. 'How can I get something of value by doing nothing for it?' I must say . . . etc." Taylor spoke very much to the point to Todd for about half-an-hour, taking the ribs out of Gus's conceit one by one, until he felt very much like a damp, damaged gamp, and about as helpless. One by one he took him through the catalogue of the aimless, stupid, footling performances in the term, and Gus blankly wondered how the dickens Taylor knew quite so much of his doings. He felt that the house master was not a bad imitation of Corker on a flaying expedition. I must say that Taylor's performance was a considerable trifle above the average "beak's wigging," but the sting of his discourse was in the tail. "Now, Todd, would you like me to ask Dr. Moore to transfer you to some other house, where your very intimate friends will not absorb so much of your time?"

Todd blushed purple at this very broad hint.

"I'd rather stay where I am; I am not quite an incapable, sir."

"No; I don't think you are—not quite. Dr. Moore, however, is somewhat out of patience with you, and proposes drastic measures."

"Home?" inquired Todd, with gloomy conviction.

"Yes," said the house master. "Dr. Moore has written your father. But you are coming back next term, when you will have the chance of showing that that awful performance in the Exhibition is not your true form. I hope you'll take it."

Todd said bitterly, "I will, sir."

"I am glad of that," said Taylor, "and I believe you will. Good-night, Todd."

"Good-night, sir."

Todd packed up his portmanteaux that night as gloomily and as savagely as though his shirts were his deadly enemies. But there was a square, determined thrust-out of his weak chin which boded ill for Jim Cotton's classics and mathematics in the future.

CHAPTER VII.

BIFFEN'S CONCERT.

It was the inalienable right of the juniors of the cock-house to give a concert the last night of the term, and to have free and undisputed possession of the concert room. Corker made it a rule that the captain of the school should be there to see there were no riots, which, as the fags were off home on the morrow, was more than possible. So when I got a polite note from Grim about half an hour after the results of the Perry Exhibition had

been announced, telling me that Corker had given the customary consent, I strolled about looking up a cohort of monitors to help me in maintaining the "sacred cause of order and decency." I knew of old those junior concerts. "Pandemonium" was nearer the word.

Biffen's juniors, red-hot from their exertions and hoarse from their shouting in the speech room, held a meeting in their own private quarters to deliberate as to their concert.

"All right, Brown; I'll talk with you afterwards. Sorry your Roman nose is out of joint, but nobody proposed you, you know, so shut up. Gentlemen——"

"Hear, hear!"

"Biffen's are cock-house at last" (deafening cheers), "and we must make our concert a stunner. It must go with a bang from start to finish. It must lick every other fag's concert that ever was, and 'be the bright harbinger

THE HOUSE MASTER CAME IN AND SURVEYED THE BOWED FORM OF POOR GUS WITH A GOOD-NATURED SMILE, TEMPERED WITH SOME SCORN.

"I vote Father Grim to the chair," said Wilson.

"Thanks, my son," said Grim, with alacrity. "Somebody second that, and let's get to business."

Somebody obligingly seconded, and Grim enthroned himself with dignity in the chair, and said cheerfully, "Carried *nem. con.* That's the way to commence biz. Now, you fellows, I thank you for this unexpected honour, which has quite taken me by surprise. I shall always——"

"Shut up, Grim," said Brown. "You know jolly well you asked Wilson to propose you."

of ——' What is the rest of the quote, Wilson?"

"'Of future joys,' you ass."

"'Of future joys,' you asses."

"I'll punch your head, Grim, you said you remembered it."

"All serene, old man, never mind the cackle."

"What about our concert?" asked Brown.

"It's going to be great. Does anyone happen to have a programme of that awful performance of Corker's house last year?"

"Rather!" said half a-dozen of Biffen's ornaments. "Did you think we'd burn a curiosity like that?"

"Cut out and get yours, Rogers, my pet."

"My pet" bolted and came back with the year-old programme of the Corker's fags.

"Pass the abomination this way, Rogers. Gentlemen," said Grim, with intense scorn, "those unspeakable Corker asses started off with a prologue."

"We must go one better—eh, you fellows?' said Rogers.

"Rather!" they all shrieked.

"I vote," said young Cherry, "that we lead off with an epilogue. That will leave 'em standing"

"Hear, hear!" said Fruity.

"Who'll second that?" said Grim.

"I will," said Rogers, cheerfully.

"Then do it, you ass," said the chairman.

"I second," said Rogers, hurriedly, "and you needn't be so beastly strict, Grim."

"Gentlemen, the proposal before the meeting is that we lead off with an epilogue. Item number one on the programme to be 'An Epilogue.' Those in favour signify. Carried unanimously."

"I say, Grim, what is an epilogue, anyhow?" said a voice.

"Oh, I say," said the chairman, "pass that young ignoramus this way. Lamb, do you mean to say you don't know what an epilogue is?"

"No, I don't."

"This is sickening," said Grim, with disgust. "A fellow in Biffen's not know what an epilogue is! Tell him, Fruity," he added, with pathetic vexation.

"He asked you," said Cherry, hurriedly.

"I'm the chairman," said Grim, in a wax, but with great relief. "Explain away, Fruity!"

"Oh, every first-class concert starts with one," he said, vaguely.

"See now, Lamb?"

Lamb professed himself satisfied, but he did not appear absolutely blinded by the light either.

"Anyhow," said Wilson, "Fruity will see to that. I propose he does."

"I second it," said Lamb, viciously, whereupon Cherry kicked the seconder on the shins, for he did not exactly thirst for that honour. "I'm an ass," he said to himself; "but, anyhow, I'll look up what the blessed word does mean, and try to do it."

"I see," said Grim, "they've got a poem on 'Cock House' for number two. That seems all right, eh?"

"Oh, yes; it's always done."

"Well, we'll have one too, eh? Who's got to do the poetry, though? Somebody propose somebody"—thereupon every fag proposed his chiefest enemy, and the battles raged along the line. "And you call yourselves gentlemen!" said Grim in disgust—he had been overlooked for the time being.

"I propose Sharpe," said Wilson, dusting himself. "He does no end swell construes from 'Ovid.'"

"I second that," said Rogers. "He has long hair. Poets always have. Milton had."

"That bit is *side*," said the chairman judicially. "Those who are in favour of Sharpe doing the poetry hold—— Carried *nem. con.*"

"*Nem. con.* is side, too, Grim," said Rogers.

"Shut up, you mule! Sharpe, you'll have to do the poem."

"I say, you fellows, it will be horse work," said Sharpe disconsolately. "There isn't a rhyme to Biffen's."

"Oh! isn't there? What about 'spiffing'?" Sharpe choked.

"Griffin."

"Tiffin."

Lamb squeaked out "stiff 'un," and someone gently led him out — even Biffen's fags caved in at that.

"Sharpe, you're booked for number two, old man. Gentlemen, I direct your attention to number three—Corker's did Indian clubs and the gold-fish dodge."

"Oh, well," said Wilson, "we're not going to copy Corker's, anyhow. Let's do dumb-bells and something else."

"I propose that Wilson does the something else," said Cherry good-naturedly.

Wilson said he was ready to do something to Cherry any time that was convenient. Rogers suggested that they ask the niggers to do something on the bars, and Sharpe seconded it, so the dervishes were written to and promised a scragging if they didn't turn themselves inside out for the glory of Biffen's concert.

"I say, you fellows," said Grim, "it's to be a concert, you know, and except for Fruity's epilogue there isn't any music down yet." Cherry groaned to think he'd been let in for a song.

"What about Thurston?" asked half-a-dozen of the fags.

"Right, oh! Now 'Dicky Bird,' hop up to the front, and trot out your list."

Thurston wasn't shy, and rather fancied his bleat, so he said "Oh! I don't mind at all."

"We thought you wouldn't," said the chairman, winking.

"What do you say to 'Alice, where art thou'?"

"We don't fancy your shouting five minutes for her at all. Next please."

"'Only to see her face again,' then?"

"Whose?" said Sharpe, irreverently.

"Why, the girl's the fellow is singing about," said Thurston, hotly.

"Oh! you'll see her the day after to-morrow, Dicky Bird, so don't you fret about that now. Do you know 'My first cigar'?"

"Do you mean the one that sent you to hospital, Grimmy?"

"No I don't. None of your cheek. I'm chairman. I mean the one Corney Grain used to sing."

"Yes."

"Well, you sing that and you'll make the fellows die with laughing. And mind you illustrate it with plenty of life-like pantomime, do you hear?"

"Carried, *nem. con.*," shouted all the fags with enthusiasm.

"Hear, hear, Grimmy!"

"So that's settled for you, and if you get an encore, Dicky Bird, you can trot 'Alice' out if you like."

"Which of the fellows have we to invite out of the eleven to help us?"

"Acton," was the universal yell.

"We'll see him, then, to-night."

"Three cheers for Acton," said someone, and the roof echoed.

"Well, we're getting on, and I say, you chaps, I have an idea."

"Hear, hear!" said Cherry, acidly, "Grimmy *has* an idea."

"A grand idea, Fruity. Your epilogue isn't in it."

"What is it, Grim?"

"We'll have a boxing competition open to St. Amory's juniors only. Rogers should pull that off, eh?"

"Rather," said they all. "One more feather in Biffen's cap."

"But, Grimmy," said Rogers, "I don't last, you know."

"Ah!" said the chairman, brilliantly, "we'll only have one two-minutes' round each draw. It will go by points. You're safe as a house, my pet, really."

"Who'll be judge about points? I propose you, Grim," said Rogers, with intent.

"Thanks, old cock, but I really couldn't do the honourable if you were 'rocky' in the last rounds. We'll ask Carr to see us through that part. You'll be all right, I tell you."

"Who's to accompany on the P and O?"

"Oh, Brown must see to that!"

"I propose Brown key-thumper."

"I second that."

"Carried," said the chair, smartly.

"I say," said Grim, "I propose myself stage manager. I'm the only fellow who knows a ha'porth about it."

"A ha'porth is an awful lot; besides, a chairman can't propose himself," said Cherry, revengefully.

"I second the chairman's proposal," said Wilson, backing up his chum.

"Carried *nem. con.*"

"No I'm hanged if it was!" said Cherry. "You're a fraud, Grimmy."

"All right now, you chaps, the meeting is over. Wilson and I will go up to Acton, and see what he'll do for us, and then we'll rough out a swagger programme."

The two worthies, Grim and Wilson, sallied out, and, after seeing Acton, began to get out their programme. Here it is:—

BIFFEN'S JUNIORS' CONCERT.

Cock House, December, 1898.

(1) Epilogue.
B. A. M. CHERRY.

(2) Poem on the subject of Cock House.
B. SHARPE.

(3) Bar Act.

(4) First Round Junior Boxing Competition.
PRINCE RUNJIT MEHTAH and RAM SINGH.

(5) SONG. "My First Cigar"
R. E. THURSTON.

(6) PIANOFORTE SOLO—
"Oh! listen to the band."
O. BROWN.

(7) Second Round Boxing.

(8) SONG. "Jim."
J. ACTON, ESQ.

(9) Third and Concluding Rounds Boxing.

(10) SONG. "Well, suppose you did?"
R. E. THURSTON.

God Save the Queen.

ACCOMPANIST . . . O. E. BROWN
Trinity College (by Examination.)

STAGE MANAGER . . . W. E. GRIM.

N.B.—The Manager begs to state that there will be no Latin or classical allusions throughout the evening. No waits. No charge for programmes. No antediluvian jokes.

This was printed on paper blushing pink—Biffen's colours—and Grim and Wilson, when they got the advance proof last thing on Saturday night, almost embraced in their jubilation. There was such a swagger look about the "N.B."

Meanwhile B. A. M. Cherry had consulted his dictionary, and therein found that an "epilogue" was defined as "a concluding speech in an oration or play." He broke into a cold sweat of horror. That was an epilogue, then! Where could he find one? What would be the good of one if he did find it? And supposing he had one and could recite it, it was at the wrong end of the programme—the programme which had already been printed in such hot haste? It was too late to tell Grim

who would have instantly summoned all the strength of Biffen's to scrag him. The wretched Cherry shuddered at his awful plight.

Nothing could he do or dare he do. In desperation he determined to fall ill on the concert night. B. A. M. Cherry hadn't the heroic soul, and when Grim asked him cheerfully how the epilogue was going on, he said "spiffing" in the tone of a martyr at the stake.

On the Monday Grim scuttled about all day—now on the stage, listening to Thurston going over his songs with Brown, now getting entries for his boxing competition, now encouraging Sharpe who was in the throes of composition, and now criticizing the Dervishes with much force. Acton put in an appearance in the concert room, and gave Brown the accompaniment to "Jim"; and, after hearing him play it through, went and read his novel the rest of his spare time.

At 7.30 the juniors of St. Amory's began to stroll in, Biffen's lot collaring the front seats as per custom. The programmes were distributed to each one as he came in, and created no end of sensation, and W. E. Grim was allowed to have come out very strong in the programme line. St. Amory's fags did not spot anything wrong about item one, but the older fellows chuckled a little and said "the manager was a funny ass." This opinion was instantly conveyed to Grim by one of his cronies and made that young gentleman think himself no end of a sly dog.

Punctually to the minute Grim rang his bell, and, darting into the dressing-room, said: "Now, Cherry, come along with your epilogue. They're all waiting. Where is that ass?"

"Cherry has not turned up yet, Grim."

"What?" he said in horror.

"Not turned up yet!"

"I'll go and fetch the beggar at once."

Grim darted out of the room, tore along the street, and was hammering at Cherry's door within the minute.

"Fruity, hurry up, they're all waiting."

"I'm not well, Grim."

"What?"

"I'm not well—I'm in bed."

"You miserable beast!" shouted Grim. "I'll massacre you. You'll make us the laughing stock of the whole school. Get up, man. Be a man."

"I'm ill," moaned Cherry from within.

"You miserable beast! You'll be dead to-morrow." He shook the door violently, but Cherry was not quite the utter fool Grim took him for, for he had locked the door. Grim stood outside on the corridor for some seconds, petrified with rage and digust, and then flew like a madman back to the concert room. He cannoned up against someone leisurely strolling up to the dressing room, and was darting on again *sans* apology. A hand gently closed upon his collar and pulled him back.

"Hallo, young shaver! Little boys used to apologise when they—— Why, it's Grim! What in the name——"

Grim, almost blubbing with anger and shame, poured out his tale, and Acton listened with an amused smile. "Sheer funk, Grim. Well, go on, and tell 'em their Cherry has rotted, but that I'll come and tell 'em a little tale instead."

Grim would have embraced Acton if he'd been a little taller; but he gurgled, "Acton, you *are* a brick," and darted on to the stage.

He was received with deafening cheers, and shrieks of "No waits!" "Manager!" "Don't hurry, Grim!" "We'll send out for supper!" "We want Cherry!" "Go off," etc.

When Grim could get a word in he panted, "Gentlemen, I am sorry to say B. A. M. Cherry is indisposed and cannot favour you with the epilogue."

"Funked it!" roared all the delighted juniors.

"He says he is unwell," said Grim, anger getting the better of him, "but he'll be a jolly sight worse in the morning."

There was a hurricane of thunderous cheers at this sally, but Grim managed to shout above the laughing, "I have great pleasure in announcing that John Acton, Esq., will take Fruity's—I mean Cherry's—place and tell you a little tale; even Corker fags will understand it," added Grim, viciously.

Acton came on and received his hearty welcome with easy good nature. He plunged right into his contribution: "A London cabby's account of his different fares"—from the double-superfine gilt-edged individual to the fat old dowager who *will* have the parrot inside with her. Acton gave it perfectly. Grim, who had his ears glued to the exit door, vowed he could almost hear the swell drop his eyeglass.

Sharpe stepped on to the stage amid the polite attentions of his natural enemies. "Be a man, Sharpe." "Don't cry." "You'll see mamma, soon." "Speak up." "He did it all alone, remember." "No help." "Oh, dear no!"

> When on the bosom of the sleeping pool,
> That's shaded o'er by trees in greenest dress,
> Upon its breast of snow its gem of gold
> The water lily swims——

The juniors howled with dismay at this commencement, and Corker juniors instantly began to keep time to Sharpe's delivery in the organ grinder's fashion. But Sharpe toiled remorselessly on. He compared Biffen's house to a water lily growing in a muddy pond and again as a Phœnix risen from the ashes, and he gave us, with

circumstantial details, every round of the footer housers, their two eleven caps, and the Perry Exhibition, and darkly hinted at Acton's exclusion from the eleven.

He wound up his awful farrago in one glorious burst of solemn fury :—

And even Fate girds on her sword, and her right arm she stiffens,
As thunders to the foy pole the glorious name of Biffen's.

When Sharpe finally made his bow, according to the invariable custom, every junior except a Biffenite imitated with rare fidelity the mixed sensations of channel passengers after a stormy passage.

No mistake about it, Biffen's had a fag who could sing. Thurston's "My First Cigar" only lacked one thing—it should have lasted a little longer to suit the audience.

She called it an Intimidad,
It had spots of a yellowish hue,
She said the best brands always had,
And I firmly believed it was true.

A good number of the fellows knew "The Soldiers in the Park," and Brown hammered it out in a good old breezy style.

As he was racing home, and the jolly chorus was crashing out of the piano, one fag started "Oh, listen to the band!"

Instantly the whole school, juniors and seniors

"THREE CHEERS FOR ACTON!"

Sharpe, cheered to the echo by the Biffenites on the front row, went proudly off.

The Dervishes were received with enthusiasm, and went through their performance to the shouts of "Well wriggled Java!" "Why don't you oil?" "Do it again — orang-outang!" They amiably smiled acknowledgments as they backed away.

Then I myself stepped on to the stage, prepared to judge the two-minutes' rounds. Grim had whipped up sixteen fags, each willing to do battle for the honour of his house. The rounds proceeded to the accompaniment of ear-splitting encouragement, and I had the satisfaction of knowing that not a solitary one of the defeated heroes thought he had really been beaten on points.

as well, joined in the chorus, keeping time with their feet.

Oh, listen to the band!
Who doesn't love to hark
To the shout of "Here they come!"
And the banging of the drum—
Oh, listen to the soldiers in the park.

When the dust had settled, everyone acknowledged that Biffen's concert was going with a bang. I am not going to bore you with a longer account of Biffen's concert. Thurston sang "Alice, where art thou?" the fellows telling him between the verses that "She wasn't going to come," "Spoony songs barred," etc., and Rogers carried off the fags' boxing competition with a big rush in the final round, and Biffen's crew howled with delight.

Finally the bell rang for Acton's song. Brown rattled through the preliminary bars, and the song commenced. The singer held himself slightly forward, in a rather stiff and awkward fashion, and his eyes were staring intently into vacancy. There was not the shadow of a shade of any expression in his face. A feeling of pity for Acton was the universal sensation when the first words fell from his lips. Acton had not the ghost of a singing voice, and the school shuddered at the awful exhibition. There was an icy silence, but Acton croaked remorselessly on. This is the song :—

Jim and I as children played together,
Best of chums for many years were we ;
I had no luck—was, alas ! a Jonah ;
Jim, my chum, was lucky as could be.
Oh, lucky Jim ! How I envied him !

Years rolled by, and death took Jim away, boys,
Left his widow, and she married me ;
Now we're married oft I think of Jim, boys,
Sleeping in that churchyard by the sea.
Oh, lucky Jim ! How I envy him !

As the words followed on there was a suggestion of oddity in that awful voice singing a comic song, and there were a few suppressed laughs at the idea. As the song progressed, the utter dreary weariness of the voice, and the rather funny words, compelled the fellows to laugh in uncontrollable bursts, but still Acton never turned a hair. When he arrived at the churchyard lines there was one universal howl of delight. Brown stopped dead at the end of the second last line, and Acton stopped dead too. Instantly all the fellows became as mute as fish. The singer straightened himself up, looked round the room with a mocking smile while one might count a dozen, and then winked to Brown, who recommenced softly on the piano. Then Acton *sang* slowly and deliberately — sang with a voice as clear and as tunable as a silver bell :—

Oh, lucky Jim ! How I envy him !

His croak was a pretence—he had hoaxed us all ! Before we recovered from our stupefaction he had vanished. The school clamoured for his return, but though they cheered for three minutes on end Acton did not reappear, and Brown struck up "God save the Queen !" Biffen's concert was at an end !

Grim held a five minutes' meeting among the Biffenites before bed.

"There's never been a fellow like Acton in St. Amory's. He goes away at nine to-morrow. The Great Midland are going to stop their express to pick up St. Amory fellows, and Acton goes up to his place by that. I vote we all go in a body to the station and cheer him off. We keep it dark, of course." This *staccato* oration was agreed to with acclamation, and Biffenites went to bed happy.

On the morrow Acton strolled into the station and espied the Biffenites, who were scattered up and down the platform with careful carelessness. The train came in, and at once the juniors crowded *en masse* round the carriage in which Acton had secured a corner seat, and stood talking to Grim, who was in fine feather.

At that very moment Phil. Bourne and young Jack Bourne bustled into the station. An idea struck Rogers, and he said to all his chums, "Here's Bourne, you fellows ; let him know we see him."

The fags were delighted, and when Bourne entered the carriage next Acton's there was a long-drawn-out hoot for his especial benefit.

"Another," said Rogers, whereat more soulful groans.

"The last," said Rogers, and Bourne took his seat to a chorus of hisses and tortured howls. He smiled a little and opened his paper, while the people in the carriage looked curiously at him.

The guard's whistle went and Acton sprang in. "Good bye."

As the train moved, Grim said, "Three cheers for Acton !"

"Hip, hip, hurrah ! Hip, hip, hurrah !"

"A groan for Bourne !" Acton smiled good naturedly to his henchmen. As he glided past he said to himself softly, "And yet I have not quite hoed all my row out either, Bourne. Wait, my friend, wait !"

Fred Swainson

(To be continued.)

WHAT WE THINK OF BOYS.

By Two Girls.

I.

Boys are brutes! *This*, dear people, *is not a rash conclusion*, unconsidered, but the outcome of years of thought and practical knowledge on the subject. It is not often a girl is seen teasing or tormenting some pet, or other innocent creature which has strayed across her path, and yet a boy is seldom happier than when indulging in some such "sport." (?)

But, to be just (*girls* are always just), much of this needless cruelty, such as bird-nesting, is the result of want of thought, more than of feeling, and when boys do think (which, alas! is seldom), they *are* occasionally very considerate and gentle.

Another of a girl's superiorities to a boy is her quickness of perception. The average girl would see in ten minutes what the average boy would take half-an-hour at least to penetrate, and then *his* discoveries would amount to very little *or nothing at all*, whilst *her's* would probably be a concise detailment of the whole thing.

So our natural conclusion is, that boys, as a rule, are dense. Of course, *they* cannot always help themselves, poor creatures, Providence not having endowed them with the finer nature which is a girl's birthright; and, I may add, it is the possession of this finer nature which makes a boy decide that a girl is (to use the slang term here employed) a "funk," or, in plainer language "a coward."

A boy has the advantage of a girl in physical strength, and consequently is able to indulge in more "sport" than a girl. He is very cheerful, and in most cases generous; can often be relied upon to help one out of a scrape, and on the whole is of such kind that we girls (however much we may look down on him at times, and in spite of all his drawbacks), *would*, in the long run, find it hard to do without, and probably have longer fits of the "dumps," and "nerves" (in which that teasing brother proves such an efficient physician), than we have at present.

Jennie Clasper.

Boys are brutes! *This*, dear people, *is not a rash conclusion.*

II.

Boys are horribly selfish about their games. A girl may have got hold of a ripping book, and just have got comfortably settled down to read, when up comes a brother and says, "Oh, do come and play with us." "I can't; I want to read, you might let me alone." Then, after a good bit of coaxing, the boy says, "Very well, then, don't!" and the girl gives in. If one of us said that to a boy, he would take her at her word, and go off, or say, "No, I don't intend to," but, somehow, we girls give in because they tell us not to. We are queer at times!

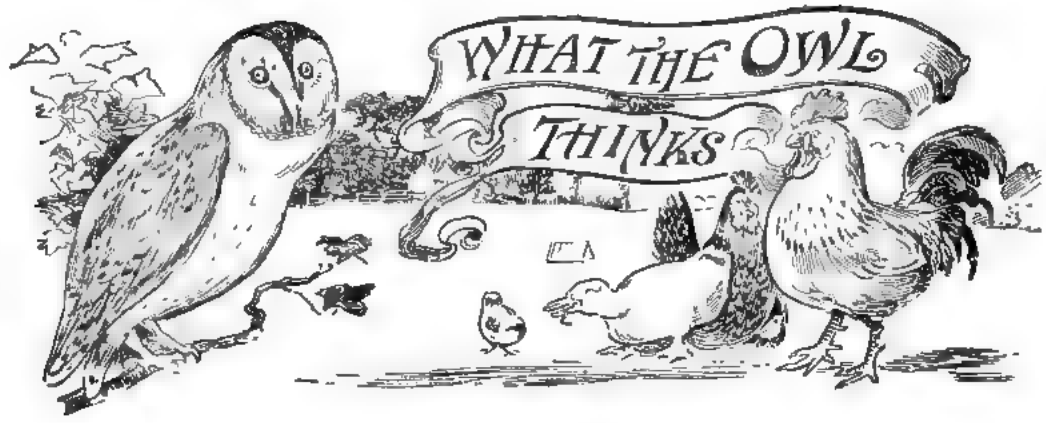
If girls are obstinate, boys take a jolly good share of laziness. Boys in general consider themselves lords of creation, and don't think anything of letting girls do work that they ought to do for themselves.

Boys' taste is another of their peculiarities. One Christmas, when I was about fourteen, the boys gave me a cardboard doll's house. How's that for good taste for a present to a fourteen-year-old girl? I thanked them for it, and in a few days sent it across to one of Dr. Barnardo's Homes.

Of course, this all applies strictly to *boys*, not very big boys who are almost men.

After all, it is really so nice having brothers to play with, and go out with. The world would be very stale to live in if there were only females in it, and I suppose boys really feel the same about us girls.

Florrie McCallum.



By G. H. Boden.

"NO," said the owl, thoughtfully. "I can't explain it, but there it is. We've tried barns and barns, but we always come back here to nest in the end. There seems to be something about a fowl-yard that sticks its claws into you and won't let go when once you have lived in it. I can't sit easy without some fowls to reflect on. There's nothing really great about a fowl either; they don't hold tight enough to things. They haven't the humour of a duck, except by fits and starts; they don't take a real pride in mud, like a pig, and even when they sit out in the sun you can see with both eyes shut that they wish it was winter. They are inquisitive, too, but it doesn't grip them in the way it grips a jay—let alone a man—and they won't thieve for the honour of the thing, like a jackdaw. You might think by the clatter they make that they would be dead on fighting, but it never lasts with most of them. They get tired half-way, just like a grown-up cat playing with a man.

"THEY WON'T THIEVE FOR THE HONOUR OF THE THING, LIKE A JACKDAW."

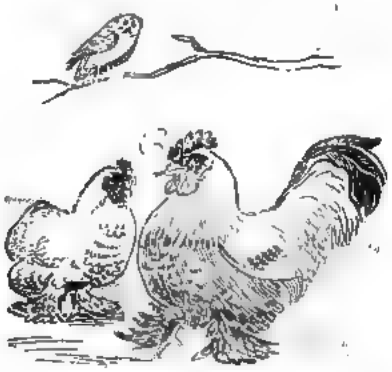
"No, they haven't any strong scent, that's a fact; but for genuine all-roundness you can't beat them. It isn't safe to say there's anything a hen won't do, if it happens to get into her head—even swimming. They don't spread themselves out to be philosophical in an ordinary way, but I've seen an old cock stand on one leg and think of the wickedness of things till his comb turned blue. Yes, the fowl is the most all-round animal I ever reflected on. There's always something to be learned from a fowl, and you may be sure that what a fowl teaches you is going to apply somewhere else and clear the sky no end.

"Now, there's that new hen they've put in the cage opposite. It just shows you how careless you can be in keeping the roost dry. If those other hens had half a mouse's tail of common sense they would see that she's likely to turn out a pecker when she has settled down, but not they—they're all going to take feathers out of her to start with, and they'll get it back pretty hot presently. That hen's counting every peck she gets, and doubling them to pay back when she has got the measurement of the pen. I've seen dogs who could learn something out of that. But dogs won't come here to learn. They *will* go hanging on the perches of men. Strange how a dog will forage for a man! I can't see anything in them, compared with fowls, anyway. There's a man that nests up in the red brick barn yonder—he can't think of anything at all to do; so he just comes down here, and puffs smoke out of his mouth to show off before the fowls. Last week he came with a stick, and made little holes in the ground to put green stuff in; it was growing all right before in another place, only they like to see them in straight rows. Well, there's a hen in that lot that goes mad when she sees a straight row; and, of course, she went

and made a hole in the pen, and scratched all the straight rows up. He might have known. She has done it before. But he only patches up the pen, and starts again. Just as if you could keep a fowl in a pen if it wanted to get out. He shouldn't make straight rows — the hen wouldn't mind then.

"But they're all just as unreasonable. There's one of them that comes and takes away the fowls' eggs every day. She has been doing it for years, and she doesn't realise yet that taking the eggs away won't stop the fowls from laying. Besides, what is a fowl for, except chickens? You could get other things to eat the corn just as well.

"No, you can't learn anything from men. Give me fowls! I like to see them in a reflective mood, when they look up here, and wonder what I'm doing without the 'f,' and then they go and sit with their heads on one side, and try to make believe



"THEY EVEN TRY THE MAN'S SMOKE-PUFFING THINGS WHEN HE LEAVES THEM ABOUT."

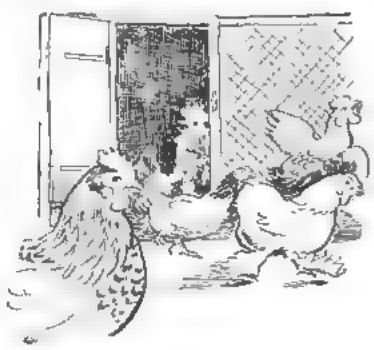
they're owls too, just to see what it feels like. I never knew such creatures for wanting to know what things feel like. I've seen one put her beak in a rat-trap—and leave it there. They even try the man's smoke-puffing things, when he leaves them about, but they taste vulgar, from what the fowls say.

"Of course, I'm not saying that all fowls have the same gifts. There wouldn't be much gained by reflecting on them if they had. Fact is, that's one of the things I reflect on most—the difference between fowls and fowls. There are some fowls good at laying eggs, and others good at breaking them. Some are peckers, and others are not. It's nothing to do with size, pecking isn't. Either you are born feeling you can peck, or you aren't. And it's just the same with getting out of those pens. Some fowls are born to get out of pens.

"There's a white hen there that gets out of a pen as easily as a cat turns corners. She can't help herself. She's cute, too. To see her when the man is about you might think that she hadn't a notion of getting out of a pen. She just sticks her neck through the wire and flurries round like a blackbird, but the moment the man goes she walks through the slit by the door. And yet that hen is a fool. When she's once out she gets caught in half a frog's jump. And there's another speckledy hen that can't remember the way out for days together, but when she does get out she doesn't go in again until she wants to.

"WHAT IS A FOWL FOR, EXCEPT CHICKENS?"

"It almost quite awakes you to see the man thinking he can catch that speckledy hen. He runs up and down on his own straight rows, for all the world like a cat playing with leaves on a windy day, and then he goes straight into a tree, and says loud things, and knocks all the fruit off. Then he starts scratching dirt at the hen, and it hits the trees, and goes in his eyes. So he sits down and thinks; and then he goes to get corn, and fills the pen with it, and opens the door for the speckledy hen, and, of course,



"OF COURSE, ALL THE OTHER FOWLS GET OUT. THAT'S JUST A MAN ALL OVER."

all the other fowls get out. That's just a man all over. He never seems to think of things like ordinary animals."

STAGE STRUCK

By Murdo Munro.

Illustrated by George Soper.

I WAS eighteen when I left school, and I may as well mention at once that I was not a bright and shining light at that institution, but I humbly entered the office of a distant relative of mine who had just gone into trade—tinned fruit and vegetables.

I had in this office one fellow clerk, a sort of overgrown office boy, called Thomas. This young gentleman soon imparted to me, with an air of some importance, the fact that his uncle was the "heavy lead" at a certain popular theatre in the East End.

Let me hasten to explain to the uninitiated that the "heavy lead" is usually the villain of the piece, the *real* murderer, you know—the one who steals the heroine's child in the second act.

The stage was Thomas' one topic of conversation, and I was not surprised when one day he announced his intention of resigning his situation and "walking on" at the Sensation Theatre as a "wedding guest" or a "happy villager" in the drama in which his uncle was then pursuing an unusually diabolical career. *Horrors of Crime; or, The Thirst for Blood*, was something like the double title of this piece, and those who hoped for much from that title were in no wise disappointed.

It had dawned upon me that the sale of Peter's Potted Peas was not sufficient to warrant the retention of clerks for any length of time, and so I was not surprised to be told, a week after Thomas' departure, that there was no longer need for my services.

My six weeks' experience in an office where I did nothing was not much help to me in securing another situation, and there followed weeks of anxiety and of the fruitless answering of advertisements, until one day I remembered Thomas, and wondered if he were still doing "thinking parts" at the Sensation.

"He might get me a similar engagement. Why not? It would be a living, and many great actors had begun so." And with this some of my old aspirations revived.

That night I went to the pit of the Sensation. As I entered the theatre the first act was in progress, and I was relieved and pleased to see Thomas as a sentinel stalking up and down the stage, apparently blissfully unconscious of the

THE VILLAIN AND THE INJURED HEROINE.

shrieks of the injured heroine and the hissed threats of the villain, who were "having it out" under his very nose.

After the commencement of the second act I went round to the stage door, and, as Thomas' name was the same as that of his "heavy" uncle, I was permitted to pass through.

After having tumbled down a flight of dark stairs, I found myself on the stage and "behind the scenes"—that place of mystery I had so often yearned to explore. They were shifting a scene as I arrived, much to the discomfort of the "leading lady," who was regaling herself with half a pork pie and some liquid refreshment out of a pewter pot (a few minutes previously I had seen her in a pale pink satin tea gown grovelling on the carpet moaning: "My chee-ild, my chee-ild! Cruel one, where is my child?")

After a series of hair-breadth escapes, I succeeded in finding Thomas (now a policeman) standing in the wings. He was delighted to see me, until I stated my object, when he became gravely patronising.

"You see," he said, judicially, "you *novices*, you expect to walk on to the stage at once, without having gone 'through the mill.'" (This was *his* third week I discovered). "But I'll see what can be done. I have a part in the piece we are rehearsing, and I expect they will want another 'extra gentleman' in my place. There's my cue—wait!" And he stalked on to the moonlit scene to harass the heroine (now in rags and dying of hunger, despite the pork pie), and returned in a few moments.

"Come and see the boss," he said. And the boss I saw, who, after asking a few questions and making me sing a scale, engaged me for small parts at the large salary of twenty-five shillings a week.

I was an actor! The piece was then in rehearsal, and it was a thrilling military drama. I made my first appearance as one of four gibbering *French* cooks on board a *British* man of war. We sang a quartette to the assembled company, and the refrain to this choice musical morsel was "Cookie, keep de kettle on de boil," and to it I played an imaginary accompaniment upon a banjo without any strings.

In the next act I was discovered as a civilian gentleman, conversing at a window with the colonel of a Highland regiment. The colonel points out his only son—a little boy—and remarks that he hopes to see him lead a regiment some day. Whereupon I had to slap the colonel affectionately on the back and say, "Yes, as bravely as his *father* did before him"—the gentle slap to take place on the word *father*.

I was not a success in this act on the first performance. I had been assured repeatedly that if I did not speak up more than I did at rehearsals I should not be heard. Now, I was determined to be heard; so when I got the cue for my one line, I shrieked it out angrily at the top of my voice, and on the word "before," *not* "father," I dealt the colonel—a mild, asthmatic old gentleman—a sounding smack between the shoulders, sending him coughing and spluttering

into the centre of the stage. You can imagine that the effect of this rendering of the line was not that originally designed by the author, and the manager afterwards made remarks — remarks which you would not understand even if I were to write them down, but the word "amachewer" recurred in them with what I thought was vindictive persistency.

I remained at this theatre and in this play for two months, after which I went on a three months' tour with the same company at an increased salary, a larger part, and as understudy to the "juvenile lead," the hero of the piece. But was I playing the noble hero at the end of the tour? No; truth compels me to relate that after some weeks I was playing the part of a tipsy old Irish woman who sold fish—fried.

I had a quick memory, and offered to take this part one night when sudden indisposition rendered the original exponent unable to proceed, and caused her to leave the company. She had been, in fact, too thorough and conscientious an *artiste*. She *felt* her part too much.

To certain audiences the mirth-promoting power of *food*, especially when maltreated, is extraordinary, and only equalled by the spectacle of hopeless intoxication; *but both combined*——!

I was considered amusing in this part, and there were roars of laughter every time I appeared—*with fish*.

It would take too long to enumerate the varied experiences of those three months. The makeshifts, the hunting at all hours for lodgings in strange towns, the feuds and internal strifes and jealousies in the company itself. All these were strange and new to me at first, and soon ceased to be amusing though always interesting, and sometimes educational. The face of every member of that company is stamped upon my memory. A good-natured lot of Bohemians—kind and generous to each other in spite of their squabbles!

One thing which befel me at this time I must relate. Once we went to a small town in the Midlands which I knew well, for near it was the home of two of my school-fellows, and I had spent many jolly days there with them. The holidays were on, but I never for a moment expected my friends to patronise the theatre when a "shocker" such as ours was being performed. Judge, then, of my horror, on looking through a hole (I should say, one of the holes) in the curtain, at seeing not only the two fellows in a dingy box, but, oh! cruellest blow of all, their sister also. Yes, she to whom I had confessed my aspirations and hopes of fame, and to whom I had imparted my idea as to how the Prince of Denmark's famous lines should be delivered, and now—now—she was to see me interpret the doubtful humours of an inebriated old Irish fish woman, and *fried* fish at that! Wild thoughts of being seized with a serious

SHE WAS TO SEE ME INTERPRET THE DOUBTFUL HUMOURS OF AN INEBRIATED OLD IRISH FISH WOMAN.

illness, or dropping down in a fit, flashed across my mind; but, alas! I was not a good enough actor for that. No, I must go on, and on I went.

Never was Bridget Macmurphy in such a hopelessly sad state as she was that night. I did not dare look up at that box, but trusted to my make-up and costume to conceal my identity, remembering with relief that my own name was not on the programme. When the curtain fell on the first act I rushed to my peep-hole and looked again. *The box was empty.*

I was not surprised, for the first act included the bombardment of Alexandria, also several battles on land and sea, and this, combined with the vagaries of Bridget, would quite explain their flight. Had they recognised me? I don't know. I have often met them since but have never asked. What do *you* think about it?

This tour finished in London, and for three weeks I was a constant visitor at theatrical agencies and stage doors, until to my joy (and surprise) I was engaged to play a principal part in a farcical comedy, which was to tour the smaller seaside towns. I have a strong suspicion that I was chosen for this part on account of the superiority of my wardrobe; but, putting this disagreeable reflection aside, I was relieved, for my scanty savings were almost at an end, and, after paying my fare to Herne Bay, where we opened, I should have very few shillings left.

We all duly met at Charing Cross Station. The manager (in a frock coat and straw hat)—after much altercation with various members of the company who could not, and some who *would* not, pay their fares—got us all aboard, and off we went. I made friends with a disconsolate-looking youth, who, I discovered, had paid a premium of £5 for the privilege of playing servants and general "utility" parts. This young man, whose name on the bills was Rudolph Montgomerie, but who asked me to call him Alf, secured a room in the house where I lodged in Herne Bay.

FIVE THREEPENNY PIECES!

After a few inefficient rehearsals, we opened, and played for a week to what appeared to be fairly large audiences, considering the size of the place.

On the Thursday of this week, my friend Alf and I discovered that we had come to within one shilling of the end of our combined resources, so I determined to ask our manager to advance me part of my salary.

"Never do it, my boy, never do it on principle," he said. So I returned crestfallen. We managed, by extreme economy, to exist upon two pots of compressed chicken and tongue (fourpence-halfpenny per pot) with bread until Saturday, when, with a light and hopeful heart, I went to the theatre to receive my salary.

"Good morning," said the manager very sadly, in answer to my cheerful salutation. "You know," he said, "we have done shocking bad biz. here. Great disappointment. You are no good in your part," he went on. "Nothing like it, my boy—no go, no dash." And he heaved a great sigh and shook his head.

I murmured my regrets, and wished he would pay me, and let me go.

"I must tell you," he resumed, "I can't pay *full* salaries this week if the tour is to go on. We have taken practically no money, and had to fill the house with 'paper.'"

"Oh, all right," I said. "Give me what you can."

"That's the style," said he. "If we are to get on we must all stick together. *Esprit de corps*, my boy; *esprit de corps*." And he placed in my hand—*five threepenny pieces!* I looked at them and was struck dumb.

Five threepenny pieces! I remember wondering vaguely, as I stumbled out of the office, why there were *five* and why they were threepenny pieces.

I went into a confectioner's and recklessly spent two of those coins, for I was very hungry. On leaving the shop I met Mr. Rudolph Montgomerie; he had a very white face and a dejected mien. I saw at once he had been to treasury, and it needed no great calculation on my part

to conclude that, as he was pretty far down on the salary list, there was no piece of money in the British coinage sufficiently small to meet his case. We "blewed" the remaining ninepence there and then, and went to our landlady and made a clean breast of the state of our affairs to her. That lady was not surprised. With a glance at my watch-chain she merely remarked that Whitstable was within walking distance, and there was, she believed, a pawnbroker's there. Acting on this delicate suggestion, we at once set out to walk to Whitstable. It was not a very long walk, and we consoled ourselves with the assurance that we should return by rail, after having had a good square meal.

Alas! on arriving at our destination we were informed by an amiable policeman that there was no "uncle" in Whitstable. We tried some jewellers, but they declined to oblige us in the manner we wished.

Back we trudged to Herne Bay.

Our landlady then assured us that there was a pawnbroker in Canterbury, and again we set out on our quest. This time she was right, and we returned by rail minus our jewellery, but with sufficient money to discharge our just debts.

Broadstairs was the next place on our list, and when I first heard we were to visit this town I recollected vaguely that I had lately had it mentioned to me, but in what connection or by whom I could not for the moment recall.

On Monday morning we met the rest of the company in various stages of indignation, and journeyed to Broadstairs, whither our manager was to have preceded us. On assembling at the hall, we were told that no manager had arrived there—and, in fact, he never did arrive there—and we were "left lamenting." Notwithstanding this blow we played here for two nights; but, as on the second night we played "to the gas," we disbanded on the Wednesday morning, and in a few hours Alf, and I, and the principal comedian were the only three members remaining in Broadstairs. We remained because we had not the wherewithal to pay our fares, and even our wardrobes, excepting what we wore, had gone the way of our jewellery.

I had one remaining possession—a banjo—seeing which the "low comedy" gentleman suggested that we should blacken our faces and give entertainments on the sands, in order to raise sufficient money for our journey to London.

This proposition we carried out. I knew several songs, which were by way of being comic, whilst Alf had an astounding *repertoire* of the most doleful and dirge-like ditties it has ever been my lot to hear. The titles of some of them will give an idea of the depressing nature of their sentiments: "Don't put my Father's Picture up for Sale." "Ring the Bell gently, there's Crape on the Door," was another; and last, and most harrowing of all, was a ballad of some length, entitled, "Don't Pawn our dear dead Mother's old Jet Brooch." The comedian for his contribution did a step dance on a little kind of baking-board, and these items comprised our entertainment. When we had finished this sorry performance, I went round the scanty crowd; collecting the rewards of our labours in a little china mug, with "For Annie" on it in damaged forget-me-nots, and which we had borrowed from among the ornaments on our landlady's mantelpiece. I had read in the newspapers of large sums being earned by seaside musicians, but on counting the results of this, our first attempt, I came to the conclusion that this line of business was very much over-rated. However, I was not surprised when I thought of my sad attempts at humour, and of Alf's dismal lamenting concerning the fate of his deceased relative's personal effects.

We gave several performances that day, but except that we were able to buy some food we were not much better off. I was very tired, and with difficulty got back to our lodgings and went to bed.

Next morning Alf and the comedian set out to walk to Margate, a feat quite beyond me as I was feeling then, and so those two pass out of this history; my banjo, I may mention, passing out along with them.

I don't intend to describe the following few days—in fact, I remember very little about them—but on Sunday morning I found myself wandering along the terrace facing the sea, and wondering which house I should go to first to beg yes, to *beg* for food.

How could I? Have you ever been hungry? I think one should always go a few days without food themselves before they judge the actions of a starving man.

I stood and read the name on a small brass plate at one door—Dr. J. M. D——.

"D——" I repeated; "D——, of course."

It flashed upon me where I had heard of Broadstairs lately. Rob D—— had been my pal at school, and in a letter only a few months before he had told me of his brother Jack buying a practice in Broadstairs. Jack would know me; he played three-quarters for the old boys. I was soon up those steps and ringing the bell.

"Yes, Dr. D—— was in," said the maid, and invited me to enter.

I endeavoured to do so, but with only partial success; for, when Dr. D—— was summoned hastily, he found me prone across his threshold, where I had fallen insensible.

"DON'T PAWN OUR DEAR DEAD MOTHER'S OLD JET BROOCH"

Three weeks later (for I really must make these jumps if I am to get half the events of that year into a reasonable space) I was back in London, and interviewing the courteous actor-manager of a well-known provincial Shakespearian company. To my delight he engaged me to play small parts in his extensive *repertoire*.

One great joke "on me," must conclude this bit of autobiography.

It was at Norwich, and we were playing *Hamlet*. I had been promoted to play the "Ghost," but besides that part, I was taking temporarily that of the "First Priest," as we were a man short at that time. The latter character has some solemn and weighty lines to "boom" forth at the scene of Ophelia's burial, and as I had not had time to get a thorough grasp of those lines, I carried the "prompt book" (disguised as a "missal") reverently on to the scene and consulted it when necessary. I was nervous about the part, as one always is about lines they have had to speak on short notice, and continued this reprehensible deception at subsequent performances, until the following accident abruptly ended my career in that part.

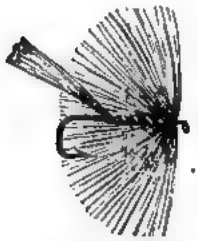
The funeral procession wound slowly on to the stage and surrounded the grave, I taking my stand at the head. A weird effigy of rag and straw, representing "Ophelia," was solemnly consigned to its long home, and I opened my "Liturgy" for a final glance at my first line. What was this? It was not *Hamlet* I held in hand, it was *Othello* I had taken in my haste. The shock drove every word of my part out of my head. In vain I tried to recall even the first line. I had heard of such situations being saved by judicious interpolations (otherwise "gagging"), but I couldn't recall even the gist of the lines and in a moment my cue would be given—yes, there it was——

"Must there no more be done?" said "Laertes" in broken-hearted tones, and gazing earnestly at me where I stood. There was a moment's horrible silence as they awaited the momentous answer; then closing the book I raised my head and in a cheerfully conversational tone addressed the honoured brother of "Ophelia":—

"No," I said blandly, but firmly, "No more," adding, "at present," as an afterthought, as I turned away and swept off the stage, leaving the thunderstruck funeral party (including Their Majesties of Denmark) priestless, to conclude the obsequies and scramble through the famous scene as best they might.

How To Catch Trout

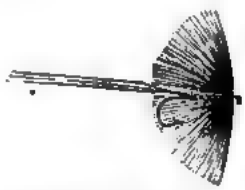
By George A. B. Dewar. *Author of the "Book of the Dry-Fly," etc.*



PENNELL'S BROWN TROUT LAKE FLY.

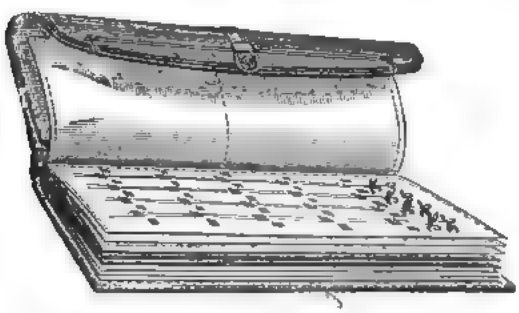
Angling for trout is one of the most healthy, innocent, and also one of the most exciting holiday occupations for boys that can be devised. I take it that most of the readers of this article know that ever delightful book, "Tom Brown's School-days."

Scarcely any of Tom Brown's adventures have a greater spice of interest and romance—the romance of the open air—about them than the angling ones. For my part, though I am, perhaps, a little bit prejudiced, I never turn to those books without having a look at the angling expeditions of that straight, robust fellow Brown; and I only wish they were a little longer and more frequent.



PENNELL'S STREAM TROUT FLY.

There is another book, written much more recently, in which we follow with intense interest the school-boy on his angling expeditions—the book of one of the greatest leaders in Parliament to-day—I refer to Sir Edward Grey's "Fly Fishing." Sir Edward has given us his experiences of his first days at that fine English school, Winchester, and told us how he planned and carried out in the face of difficulties his trout-fishing arrangements there. For a long while he failed utterly to catch fish in the clear chalk stream, but by intense enthusiasm and much application succeeded ultimately in getting one sizable trout. After that, though not all at once, he landed seventy-six trout.



TROUT FLY BOOK.

There are four principal methods of catching a trout—namely, wet-fly fishing, dry-fly fishing, spinning with an artificial minnow, and worm fishing in low, clean waters with the Stewart tackle.

Fly fishing is by common consent the most exciting and worthy form of angling, and I would strongly advise all you boys who desire to be anglers, and who have the chance, to learn to cast an artificial fly at the earliest possible opportunity. Do not be discouraged by those who tell you that fly fishing, either with dry or wet fly, is too scientific, or that the tackle required is too costly. If you begin at an early age, and are keen, you will soon learn to cast a fly

ROLLED WINGED EYED TROUT FLY.

DOUBLE SPLIT WINGED EYED TROUT FLY

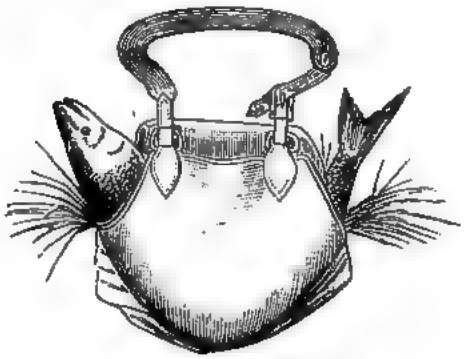
Illustrations kindly supplied by Messrs. C. Farland & Co., Ltd., 191, Strand, London, W.C.

properly; and as for the question of the cost of tackle, I assure you I have often seen anglers with the cheapest rod, the shabbiest landing net, and the smallest stock of flies achieve much greater things

STAINED WICKER BASKETS.

than men who have spent many pounds on a great assortment of useless encumbrances purchased at expensive tackle-makers.

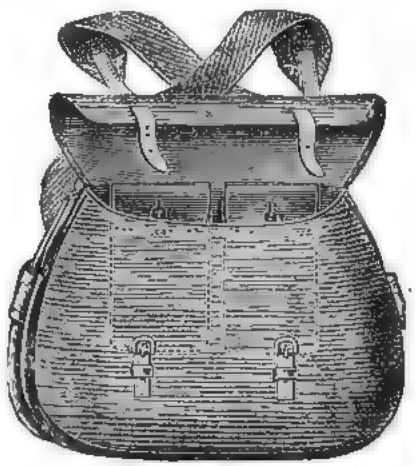
The rod for fly fishing for trout, which can also be used for worm fishing, is the chief item. Probably, on the whole, the best rods for trout fishing which are at present made are split cane ones; but as even fairly good split canes cost a good deal of money, the young angler will, perhaps, be well advised to confine his ambitions to a green heart. The rod for streams of an ordinary size should not be more than 10ft. 6ins. in length, and even a rod of 10ft. is by no means inconveniently short for small waters. A good green heart rod can usually be obtained from a London or a local maker for about one third or one fourth the price paid for a split cane, and I have known green hearts, which cost from 18s. to 25s., last well for many years without getting warped or broken. If



WATERPROOF "PRIEKE" FISHING BAGS.

possible, the rod should have a spare top joint, and the angler will do well if he studies how to neatly repair breakages; let him always, at any rate, when he has only one top, carry about a little fine twine and cobbler's wax for repairs in case an accident should occur.

Landing nets are implements which some anglers with plenty of money pay as much for as the poorer angler gives for his rod. As a matter of fact, a decent plain landing net, with a bamboo handle, can be bought for 3s. or 4s. I had one, for which I gave 4s., that lasted many years and landed many hundreds of trout. For the check winch the young angler will have to give from 3s. 6d. to 5s., and, say, 4s. for a waterproof trout line of 25yds. or 30yds. in length. In addition, he will require (1) a small, plain, tin box for his flies (which should be with gut for wet-fly fishing, and with eyed hooks not with gut if for dry-fly fishing); (2) a small stock of flies—say about two dozen to begin with; (3) a few gut casts, and (4) a simple bag or creel for holding his fish—when caught—and his tackle.

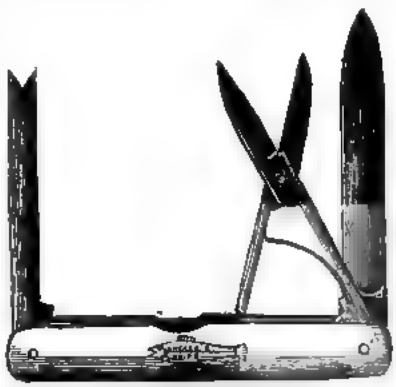


THE "PORTMAN" FISHING BAG.

An outlay of £2 at the very outside should certainly see him through the first season, and afterwards his expenses will be limited to new flies and gut casts. I should add that the same winch or reel, gut casts, as well as rod, and of course landing net, will do either for fly fishing or for worm fishing. For spinning the artificial minnow, an extra top, considerably stouter than the fly top of the green heart, will be required, which will mean an extra outlay of 2s. or 2s. 6d.; but minnow spinning for trout is comparatively a method rarely practised, and I do not propose to describe it in this brief article.

Wet-fly fishing is the usual method in rather sharp streams, when the water is not exceedingly clear and the trout not very shy or wary. On Scotch waters, both river and lake, or Welsh waters, in Devonshire and Cornwall, and in many streams in the North of England and elsewhere, it

is the usual way of fly fishing. In this article it will be obvious that I can describe the different methods only in the merest outline; to give a full account and full directions I should want at least one whole number of THE CAPTAIN. Very briefly, then, let me try to give a hint or two as to the method of procedure in wet-fly fishing. Three flies at the most should be attached to the gut cast (the tackle-maker from whom the flies are purchased will show how to attach them), and it will be the object of the angler to cast his line so that the flies will fall as lightly as possible upon the water. In strong streams it is not necessary to impart by gentle movements of the wrist much movement to the flies when the line has fallen in the water and is speeding down stream from the bank opposite the angler to the bank on which he is fishing; whilst if the angler is casting his flies, not down, but up stream, he



ANGLER'S KNIFE.

TROUT WADING NET.

will be careful to impart no movement whatever to them. The boy who has the making of the true angler in him will desist from coming nearer the edge of the water than he can help, whether he is fishing with the dry or wet fly, because fish will never rise if they see the angler—in vain is the net spread in the sight of the bird.

The method is termed wet-fly fishing because the angler lets his flies sink, and the trout commonly takes them, or rather one of them under water. The angler steadily fishes all the likely-looking spots, working up or down stream, according to whether or no he prefers to fish up or down. When he sees a dimple which he believes to be a fish taking one of his flies or feels a little tug under water, he "strikes," i.e., makes a sharp but not too violent upward movement of his forearm, to drive the hook well home into the trout's mouth. Then begins the fun of "playing" the trout. To try to jerk a trout of 1lb., or of even ½lb. out of the river over one's shoulder would result in a smashed rod top or a lost gut cast, and accordingly the angler has now to reel up his line and now to pay it out, according to whether or no the trout is giving in or holding out. When the fish is exhausted, he gives up struggling and flaps about, lying helplessly on his side, and then the landing net comes into use.

In dry-fly fishing the angler does not fish likely-looking places, but he waits till he actually sees a trout rise at some natural fly on the water, and then he tries to cast his own artificial one about a foot or so above that trout and let it float down over him. If the trout rises, it is necessary to "strike," so as to drive the hook home, and then the fish has to be played in just the same way as in wet-fly fishing. In dry-fly fishing it is absolutely necessary that the angler should hide himself from the fish, and, as a rule, he will do well to cast from a kneeling position. Even the fish will often see the rod, and be off in a moment. It is only by long practice and observation that the angler will learn how to hide himself and his rod from the trout in clear, bright waters. This hiding is one of the most interesting and also one of the most difficult things which the angler has to master in dry-fly fishing. In dry-fly fishing only one artificial fly is used, and nowadays it is commonly touched with a little paraffin oil, which the angler carries about in a small bottle. This makes it float on the top of the water, instead of sinking, as the flies do when used in the other way. It is necessary, also, to shake the moisture out of the fly by two or three backward and forward movements of the line in the air before each cast to the trout is made. Dry-fly fishing is a tremendously exciting

EYED FLY GUT CUTTER AND TWEEZERS.
A Tweezers or Flyers. B Cutters. C Hole for string to attach to button.

pursuit, because you can see so much of the game—when you see a good trout come up and open his mouth to seize your artificial fly, it is a great moment. In wet-fly fishing you rarely see this take place. I strongly recommend young anglers not to be discouraged by anything they may hear or read as to the great difficulties of dry-fly fishing. If they stick to it they will ultimately succeed, and then be richly rewarded.

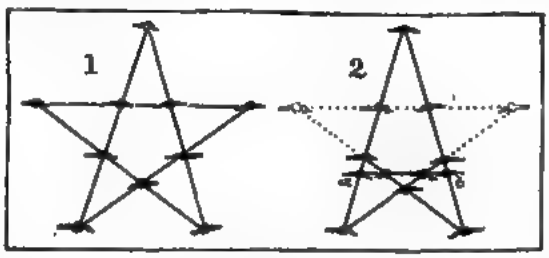
I will conclude with this wise saying of a great angler: "*Quiet, steady, intelligent effort is needed to become a master of rod and line, to be able to do with them the best that can be done.*"

"THE CAPTAIN" PUZZLE CORNER.

CONDUCTED BY HENRY E. DUDENEY ("SPHINX").

Joubert's Guns (SOLUTION).—The instructions of General Joubert were very clear—place ten guns in five straight entrenchments so that there shall be four guns in every entrenchment, and so that as many guns as possible shall be free from attack except by crossing an entrenchment. There are several ways in which this may be done so as to protect one gun from outside attack, but only one way in which we may protect two guns. The correct arrangement is as shown in Diagram 2, which also indicates the best way of altering the original plan, given in Diagram 1. By digging the small trench from *a* to *b*, and bringing four guns down to this new trench the least possible labour is entailed. Of course, the guns are very crowded, but then, as I remarked, Joubert's ideas of fortification are peculiar.

The Three "Swan" Fountain Pens for the best correct solutions have been awarded as follows:—CLASS I., John F. Lowry, 14, Northumberland Place, Westbourne Grove, W. CLASS II., Henry G. Jefferd, 17, Rochford Road, Basingstoke. CLASS III., Alick Forrest, Arden, London Road, Kilmarnock. Hundreds of competitors only succeeded in protecting one gun, and out of some thirty who sent the correct *arrangement* only a few showed the best way of *altering* the original plan. There will be no "honourable mention" this month, but in future I shall try to give such mention when the total number of correct solvers does not exceed twenty-five. Any competitor who shall succeed in obtaining six of these "honourable mentions" will be entitled to a prize of a beautiful book on making his application for it. A good many competitors disqualified themselves this month by failing to comply with the conditions printed on page 569 of our March issue.



JOUBERT'S GUNS PUZZLE.

This Month's Puzzle.—Please look at the illustration at the back of frontispiece. The TWELVE SCHOOLBOYS (1), for some reason, want to make a selection of half their number, and the boys in Eton jackets (whom we will call "Blacks") wish to get as many of the six chosen on their side as they can; while the boys in cricketing flannels (whom we will call "Whites") want the same for their side. It is proposed to select a number and then count round and round in one direction, as in the old puzzle of "Christians and Turks," and when the number falls on a boy he steps out and the counting begins again from the point where it left off, until the six are chosen.

Now, what is the smallest number you would select (1 is, of course, not allowed) in order to count out as many "whites" as possible, and in which direction would you count? You may start at any boy you like. Let us suppose you select the number 8 and go in the direction of a clock hand, starting at the "black" who is standing with his hands behind him. The first boy to be counted out (the 8th) will be the "white" standing nearest at the bottom of the picture, the next will be the "white" who is second from the top, but the four others will be all "blacks." Try the same number in the opposite direction, and you will again get two "whites" and four "blacks." What is the best you can do for the "whites?" Remember, directly your number falls on a boy he drops out of the ring.

(2) **The Seven Money-Boxes.**—A boy has seven money-boxes. Starting on the 1st January last, he has placed a penny in the first box every day, a penny in the second box every second day, a penny in the third box every third day, and so on, placing a penny in the seventh box every seventh day. When it first happens that he has to place a penny in every one of the seven boxes on the same day, he proposes to draw out the money. On what date will that happen, and what will be the amount of his savings?

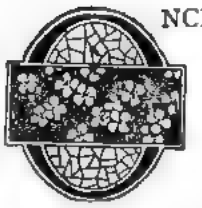
(3) **The Cornish Fishermen.**—Five Cornish fishermen found a hogshead of sherry washed up on the sea shore. It contained the full measure of fifty-four gallons, but in opening it they allowed nine gallons to be wasted. The remainder was divided equally amongst them, but, though each received one-fifth share, nine gallons of wine remained in the hogshead. How did this happen?

There will be three classes, and three prizes of 7s. each will be awarded to the senders of the best solutions this month. Address to "Sphinx," THE CAPTAIN Office, 12, Burleigh Street, Strand, W.C. Letters to be received not later than May 12th. For age limits see "Competitions for May," p. 187.

HOW SHORTHAND WRITERS "TRIP."

By Oliver McEwan.

Author of "The Humours of Shorthand," "Verbatim Reporting," etc



NCE upon a time newspaper readers often made merry over the laughter-provoking mistakes which not infrequently crept into the reports of great men's speeches; but now, owing to editorial vigilance, the more amusing errors never reach the compositor; while the few that do usually appear in obscure country periodicals of which the big world knows nothing. I purpose, therefore, discovering, as it were, from behind the scenes, some amusing stenographic errors; and will also endeavour to give this article a didactic turn by showing how the errors occurred, and how they might have been avoided.

Stenographic "trips" are mostly caused by carelessness or slovenliness in forming the characters. For instance, "f" and "p" are distinguished from each other thus:

Now it would naturally be supposed that shorthand writers would invariably observe this difference, but, as a matter of fact, they do not; and this leads to all sorts of absurd mistakes. A certain novelist, while dictating a story to his amanuensis, gave her this sentence: "The girl, wearied with her exertions, threw herself upon her *pillow*." The shorthand amanuensis slightly curved her "p" in *pillow*, making it look like "f," and rendered it *fellow* in her transcription. There was some reason for that novelist's madness when he came to read the manuscript.

It may have been a natural prejudice which induced a publican's son to transcribe "a *tattler* is worse than a thief," as "a *teetotaler* is worse than a thief"; but an examination of his shorthand notes discovered the fact that he had written the first "t" in *tattler* half length, and so made it look like the "tt" in *teetotaler*, thus:

These two shorthand writers had evidently given heed to the erroneous idea so commonly prevalent, that neat writing and fast writing are antagonistic; that if high speed is to be attained, less and less regard must be paid to the mathematical accuracy of the characters. That this idea is the reverse of true has been abundantly proved; for all those shorthand writers who have achieved distinction were first of all remarkable for an extraordinary neatness in writing. To be able to write at a phenomenally high speed, and yet be able to read shorthand as easily as common print, the shorthand writer must first learn to write neatly, *and keep on doing so*.

Another prolific cause of errors is a smattering, instead of a perfect knowledge, of the general rules for forming outlines. A shorthand amanuensis who had dictated to her this misquotation: "Cast bread on the waters, and it will return after many days," wrote it

instead of

She vastly improved upon her employer's misquotation by rendering it thus: "Cats buried in the water return after many days." Evidently this shorthand writer knew nothing of the "st" loop as used in *cast;* of the hook for "n," as in *return;* of the "waw" sign used before "tr" in *water;* nor did she remember, when taking down the notes, that the circle "s," placed at the end of an outline, is invariably read last.

I have heard of teachers who instruct their pupils that it matters little how they write—orthodoxly or otherwise—so long as they can read their notes. If such teachers do exist, they show a lamentable ignorance of what makes the easy and correct reading of phonography possible, and I am less surprised at the large number of so-called shorthand writers who find it utterly impossible to read their notes The truly expert shorthand writer has but one outline for each word—the correct one. For though it is true that some words might be represented by more than one character, only one of these, as a rule, is correct, and that alone is to be depended on.

A cheese-paring manufacturer, who would never pay more than a pound a week for a shorthand clerk's services, found to his cost

that such economy does not pay. One day he sent off an estimate for *forty thousand lamps*. To his surprise and chagrin the valuable contract was given to a rival who had quoted a higher price. Fuming at this too evident favouritism, he demanded an explanation from the city surveyor, who handed him back his estimate for *four* thousand lamps. Then he examined his shorthand clerk's "notes," and found that he had written *forty* so as to look like *four*—thus:

Four, *forty* as written

should have been

As a general rule it is better to use figures, as 40 (= 40,000.

Poor and *pure* are thus distinguished:

poor (according to rule), but *pure*

(exception). But owing to a reporter's ignorance of this, a statesman was made to say of a political opponent, that he was "a *poor*-minded man," instead of a *pure*-minded man.

Again, in the *dictation* of a novel the heroine "ate the *parsley slowly*." The shorthand amanuensis, however, wrote the italicised words thus instead of

with the result that in her transcript the heroine "ate the *parasols wholly*."

The same shorthand amanuensis transcribed

"Her life was as sad as a heifer bull's"; whereas, what the novelist said was: "Her laugh was as sweet as a silver bell."

Life and *laugh* have exactly the same outline if left unvocalised. Therefore, one or other should be "distinguished" by a vowel, *laugh* (as above) preferably, seeing that it is not so frequently occurring as *life*.

The lives of merchants are frequently made miserable by the incompetency of their shorthand clerks, and there is often a consequent loss of time, temper, and, sadder still from the merchant's point of view, of money as well. A well-known stockbroker dictated a letter, in which he asked a wealthy client to meet him on the following day. By writing *can* in such a way that it was easily read as *cannot*, the letter was made to say the very reverse of what was intended. Next day the stockbroker waited in vain for the wealthy client, who did not appear. Inquiry elicited the fact that the client had received the following curt note: "Dear Sir,—I *cannot* see you to-morrow at three as you desire."

Incensed at such treatment, the wealthy client employed another broker, and would listen to no explanation.

One might go on indefinitely quoting absurd mistakes made by incompetent shorthand writers, but I have said enough to show that if shorthand is misread the fault lies with those who write it rather than with the art itself. The secret of success is this: write neatly, know and apply the rules for outlines, for contractions, and for phrases, and master all the expedients provided for the distinction of similar words. Then, mistakes such as I have pointed out will be next to impossible.

"THE CAPTAIN" CHESS CORNER.

RESULT OF CHESS COMPETITION (MARCH).

The prizes (three Fountain Pens) are awarded as follows:—

CLASS I.—A. E. A. SEARLE, 109, Stockport Road, Hyde.

CLASS II.—H. BURTON, Button Park, Pontefract.

Honourable mention: A. J. HEAD, 256, Marylebone Road, N.W.; C. B. JOYNER, Lake View, Pitville, Cheltenham; L. THOMAS, 39, Haven Green, Ealing, W.

CLASS III.—W. W. BURKETT, 11, Comerford Road, Brockley, S.E.

Inter School Chess Tournament.—Owing to difficulties having arisen as regards the working of this, the tournament must be postponed for a period.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

P. H. Beazley.—(1) Queen against two knights only draws under certain conditions. (2) Two knights cannot checkmate in the centre of the board.

N. B. Dick and G. F. Nightingale.—Entries received. See above.

NOTICE.—During the summer months there will be no Chess Competitions in THE CAPTAIN. *They will recommence in October.*

"Hæc olim meminisse juvabit."

Aberdeen Grammar School Magazine (January) contains some straightforward and wholesome criticisms on the school "Rugga Feet-ball" team.

Alma Mater (an illustrated Australasian University newspaper) is notable for the number of poems it gives space to—comic poems and serious poems, and French sonnets, and translations from "Horace." These lighten what is otherwise a rather dull periodical.

Arvonian (December) comes from the Carnarvon County School—a young ladies' seminary. The magazine should begin with "Notes"—all school magazines should. The "Oxford Letter" is lively; the short tale, called "A Holiday," is silly; but the get-up is neat. Will the editress tell me what the Welsh motto on the cover means?

The Blundellian (December) records the death of Dr. Stark (O.B.) at Ladysmith:—

> Towards sundown on Nov. 18, a shell from "Long Tom" on Umbalwane flashed through the "Royal Hotel" and struck Dr. Stark, who was standing in the doorway. He died an hour later. Like many of the townspeople, he retired during the day to the caves dug in the river bank to avoid the shells, and had only just returned to the hotel when he was hit.

Bracondale School Magazine (December) seems to have just the right amount of everything. The poetry is very passable.

Breconian contains (among other things) two pages of short, practical "Letters to the Editor" on such varied subjects as the changing-room, the "organ in chapel" (whose "noises and groans" are strongly objected to), the chapel services, the sort of hat to wear on Sundays, the shed for bikes, the cadet corps, and the colour of the football cards. Good!

Brighton College Magazine (December). The staff poet complains of the quality of "verse" that sometimes decorates (or fails to decorate) the pages of the "Dily Chronikl." He cannot understand why anyone should go out of his way—

> To use the gutter dialect,
> And think that "strite" 's as good as "straight,"
> To write "darn," "rarnd," "surpawst," "eggspect"
> (When will this sewer-flood abate?)

—and I must say I am with him there.

The Carthusian (February) prints a letter from P. M. Walters (the famous "Soccer" back, I presume) urging old Carthusians and other public school men to join the "Devil's Own," *i.e.*, Inns of Court Volunteer Corps. I hope O.C.'s and others are answering to this call. By the way, gallant Baden-Powell is an O.C.

Chelmsfordian (December) records the fact that every boy in the school purchased a copy of its last issue. This seems good business.

The Collegian (Methodist College, Newfoundland) publishes a twenty-four page descriptive article by the editor. Why he should fill the magazine with such poor stuff as this I fail to understand.

The Cottesmorian, Vol. I. No. 1. A new venture! Neat cover, neatly printed, interesting school notes. *Verdict:* "Good." A highly excellent idea is printing in tabular form the names, heights, ages, and weights of all the boys in the school. The youngest weighs 3st. 10½lbs.

Elean (December) prints an eight-page extract from the Dean of Ely's lecture on the "Ideal Woman of the Poets." I wonder how the chaps in the Fourth liked it!

Floreamus! (University College, Sheffield) has nine pages of tradesmen's advertisements.

Georgian (St. George's College, Woburn Park, Weybridge) contains an article on the war by the French master. This is interesting reading just now. He says:—

> No reasonable man can doubt that the Boers have broken their word by hatching a plot officially repudiated by President Kruger in his letter to the Queen. . . . The snare meant for England entangled the Boer President; in his kindness, he had reckoned without his guest: diamond cut

diamond. The Colonial Secretary had a right to turn his abilities to the best account and to ward off a deathly stroke; had he rushed into the snare with irresistible impulse, England's supremacy in South Africa would have come to an end.

Grovian (February).—On the whole, very well done.

Haileyburian (March) prints the "shop" balance-sheet, which shows, for one year, a nett profit of £200. This is healthy. £2,320 was taken over the counter during the year. The "Haileybury Fashion Letter" is a good idea.

Harrogate College Magazine prints *nineteen* letters to "Mr. Editor." Among the signatories I note "Pimple," "Sunflower," "Health Salts," "Oom Paul," "Sambo," "Mrs. Stickinthemud," "Kruger," "Slosher," "Cod Liver Oil," "Spotted Jack," "Tic-Tack," and other queerly-named correspondents. Sly dog, Mr. Editor!

Jubilee Echoes is the organ of the Ottawa Normal School. Mr. F. E. Bawden sends me the fiftieth half-yearly number, and a very good number I find it. This magazine boasts two editors, six sub-editors, and a sporting editor—what ho!

Kelvinside Academy Magazine is run (a pencilled note informs me) entirely by members of the Sixth Form. I am sorry to see that the Kelvinside Sixth Form cannot run a journal without the aid of tailors' advertisements.

Llandovery School Journal.—A line that I have rarely seen in any paper catches my eye: "*The Editor desires to acknowledge the great assistance he has received from the sub-editors.*"

Llanelly County School Magazine.—The number before me is the first issued, I gather from the editorial exordium, but there is no "No. 1" on the cover. Your notes are witty and concise, Mr. Editor—go on and prosper.

Marling School Magazine.—I don't like the get-up of this mag. Why so many blank spaces? Smarten up your "Notes," and ask your printer to take a little more trouble. The cover is very fair, but that's all I can say for you.

Mercers' School Magazine, Vol. I., No. 1. Not a bad new baby, but you must brighten it up, Mr. Editor. Get the school wag to write you some witty paragraphs. I shall always be glad to see the mag., even if I can't always review it.

Novocastrian (December). Begin with "School Notes," and put your poetry in anywhere.

Ousel.—Why not have a cover?

Plymothian.—Keep your "Oxford Letter" down a bit.

Quernmorian contains a very poor pen-and-ink sketch of the captain of the school. The artist is more successful in his football pictures.

Reptonian.—In get-up and printing this is an excellent model for other editors to take a tip or two from.

The Review (Grocers' Company School) contains seven pages of advertisements.

Rockhampton Grammar School Chronicle (first number issued) is, for a first number, a very creditable production. The "List of School Captains" since the school opened is an excellent idea. We observe, Mr. Editor, that you quote a line from THE CAPTAIN in your opening remarks, but that you do not acknowledge source of quotation.

Sandbachian.—A good little mag., but why no cover? Get a *Reptonian*, and model yours on that.

Sedberghian (February) prints a list of *sixty* old boys "at the front." Among those killed are Lieutenant R. J. T. Digby-Jones, V.C., and Lieutenant F. G. Tait (Black Watch), the champion golf player. Readers of THE CAPTAIN who have followed the war in the newspapers will remember how gallantly Lieutenant Digby-Jones fought when the Boers made their second attempt to take the camp by storm. It was during the attack on Wagon Hill that Digby-Jones met his death. Here is an account of it:—

> The subaltern in charge of the working party of sappers was Lieutenant Digby-Jones, a youth of twenty two, who had already won fame by the destruction of the howitzer on Surprise Hill. When the enemy first appeared on the crest of Wagon Hill, Lieutenant Digby-Jones engaged the storming party from the sangar on the West front. Driven from that position, he had been conspicuous throughout the engagement for acts of heroism that attracted the notice of Colonel Hamilton, who had decided to recommend him for the Victoria Cross. Collecting a mixed company of sappers, rifles, and Highlanders, he led them against the new position held by the enemy. As they dashed up the narrow path the Boers, never imagining that men could display such reckless courage, called upon them to throw up their hands. Bullet and bayonet convinced them of their error, and the position was ours.
>
> But fate was holding the shears over the thread of this heroic life. An hour or two afterwards, when we had, at great sacrifice, reconquered the western limit of the hill, Lieutenant Digby-Jones was in the gun emplacement with Major Miller-Wallnutt, and one or two men. The enemy had been driven back, yet maintained a searching fire, and, having received strong reinforcements, was preparing for another advance. Suddenly three or four great dark shadows were cast over the parapet, in which there were no loop-holes. Von Wyk, leader of the Harrismith commando, Field Cornet de Villiers, and another brave Boer, were making their last desperate charge. Major Miller-Wallnutt shot his man and fell himself from a bullet aimed at the back of his head. A corporal of the sappers slew de Villiers, whose bandolier was almost filled with explosive bullets. Lieutenant Digby-Jones, running out of the emplacement, shot the Commandant Von Wyk before he himself ended a short yet heroic career with a Mauser bullet through the throat.
>
> I am glad to hear that the Victoria Cross is to be sent to Lieutenant Digby-Jones' parents.

Sidcup College Magazine.—Very well edited.

The Trident (Trent College).—Tell your printer to use "bourgeois leaded" type. Your calendar is a good idea well carried out.

Truro College Magazine.—The "editorial" is clever, but isn't it a wee bit over the heads of school-boys? Photo of "Rugger" team is good.

Vigornian.—"Notes" will do. "Through the North Island" is far too long. Why don't you editors cultivate a sense of *proportion?*

Williamsonian.—Don't you ever put Vol. and No. on your mag.?

Wilsonian.—You'll do.

Wulfrunian.—For your cover use paper three shades lighter. *Make* your printer see to this. By the way, why not call your mag. "The Wulf"?

Wyggestonian.—"School Notes" first of all, please. I like your cover.

Other magazines received:—

Alperton Hall Magazine, The Bedan, Bromptonian, The Carlist, Cliftonian, Danensis, Elstonian, Glasgow Academy, Chronicle, Hamiltonian (Australia), Herefordian, Heversham School Chronicle, Hurst Johnian, Hymerian, Johnian, Jottings, Lancing College Magazine (2), Leys Fortnightly (4), Lorettonian, Malvernian (2), Merchant Taylors' Review, "N.E.C.S.," Olavian, Peterite, Portmuthian, Rye Grammar School Record, Scribbler (2), Taylorian, Wellingtonian.

SPECIAL PAGES.

Contributed by Readers.

THIS month's winner of One Year's Subscription to THE CAPTAIN is J. DONALD HUGHES, Downfield Lodge, Clifton, who sends the drawing entitled "Fowls and Houses." Some clever little poems and other contributions will be found below—notably those by J. W. Joseph and R. Bruce Chambers. The prize drawing will be found on page 135.

Who Killed Paul Kruger?

Who killed Paul Kruger?
"I," said Tom Atkins,
"With my little maxims,
I killed Paul Kruger."

Who saw him die?
"I," said old Steyn;
"For my vision is fine;
I saw him die."

Who'll make his shroud?
"I," said Lord Kitchener;
"I'll put a stitch in 'er;
I'll make his shroud."

Who'll be the parson?
"I," said "our Bobs,"
"But without any sobs,
I'll be the parson."

Who'll be the clerk?
"I," then said French;
"If it's not in a trench,
I'll be the clerk."

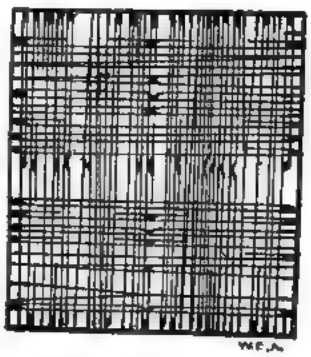
Who'll sing a psalm?
"I,"—Baden Powell
Said, "I know how to howl,
I'll sing a psalm."

Who'll carry him to the grave?
"I," said Cecil Rhodes;
"For I'm used to big loads;
I'll carry him to the grave."

Who'll be chief mourner?
"I," then said Plumer;
"If I'm in a good humour,
I'll be chief mourner."

Who'll toll the bell?
"I," said John Bull;
"I forgive him in full,
I'll toll the bell."

J. W. JOSEPH.



Put your eye on a level with the page, first longways, then sideways, and you'll find the name (and author's name) of a story that has appeared in THE CAPTAIN.

Drawn by Wm. E. Atwell.

Boo-hoo!

Small boy (on being refused the top brick off the chimney): "I wish our father had married Miss Jollyboy, then you wouldn't be our mother and we shouldn't be us."

A. G. SIMMONS.

This Isn't Bad.

Music Teacher: "Now if '*f*' stands for 'forte,' what will '*ff*' stand for?"

Dull Pupil: "Eighty."

CHARLES G. MCCLURE.

Very Remarkable.

Two American skippers were conversing together and relating their different experiences. "Yaas," said one of them, in reply to some question from the other, "when I was on my last voyage, a vast number of locusts settled down on my ship and eat up every shred of canvas that was set on the ship."

"Well, that is strange," said the other skipper. "I was homeward bound about the same time, and one day I was amazed to see a tremendous number of locusts passing by, and they all had canvas trousers on." Those two skippers are not on speaking terms now.

A. ADAMS.

PUNCTURED TYRE.

Drawn by Fred. Meredith.

GOOD SUBSTITUTE.

The Midshipmite.

If you see a little stripling,
With bonnie face and bright;
And whose laugh is true, and rippling;
And dear eyes full of light:
His name is quite a synonym "for doing things in style"—
A little British middy (with a smile).

If you think of proud young Viking,
Of spirit brave and bold;
And of honour e'en more striking
Than in the days of old:
His name is quite a synonym for "spirit, truth, and game"—
A little British middy (with a fame).

If you hear of cruisers steaming
Up little Afric creeks,
And of young eyes strangely gleaming—
Ah! then come "narrow squeaks":
His name is quite a synonym for "boys know how to work"—
A little British middy (with a dirk).

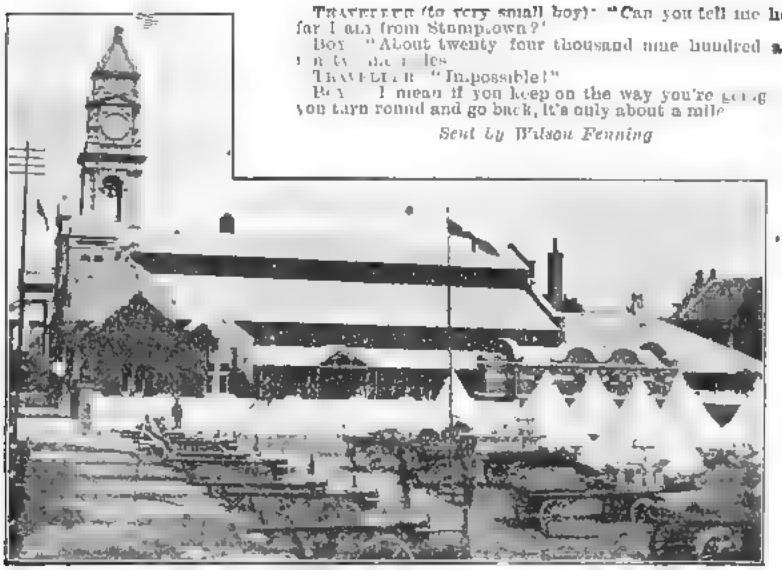
If you hear of wild waves raging,
And mother's boy at sea;
Just think of him engaging
In prayer to God on knee—
His name is quite a synonym for "boy-like love of home"—
A little British middy (on the foam).

If you hear of hearts repining
In British sea-girt isle:
You think of bright eyes shining,
And middies' folks the while:
His name is quite a synonym for "brave young heart and whole"—
A little British middy (with a soul).

R. BRUCE CHAMBERS.

THE OLD CHURCH OF BONCHURCH.
Photograph sent in by T. H. Durrans.

TRAVELLER (to very small boy): "Can you tell me how far I am from Stumpstown?"
BOY: "About twenty-four thousand nine hundred and [illegible] miles."
TRAVELLER: "Impossible!"
BOY: "I mean if you keep on the way you're going. If you turn round and go back, it's only about a mile."
Sent by Wilson Fenning.



THE DEFENCE OF DURBAN.
Sent in by "Nil Desperandum."

An Enigma.

I help to form the singular and the plural. I am foremost in every language and locality. I have no connection with the army or the war, yet Buller himself would be lost without me. If it had not been for me, neither the relief of Kimberley nor that of Ladysmith could ever have been accomplished. I hold no

position in society, yet London could not exist without me. I am never denied a place in Parliament, for there would be no law without me. I am never to be found in the universe, although I never leave the world. I will astonish you by saying that if it were not for me there would be no "Old Fag"!

What am I?

(The answer is the letter "L.")

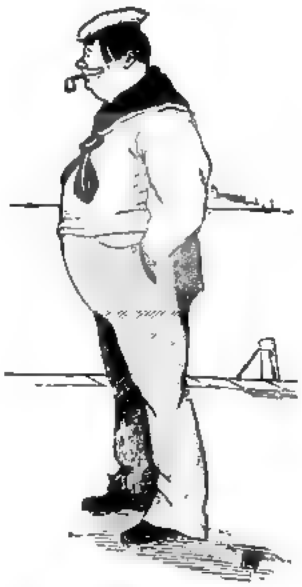
NORA WARD.

How to Make a Hektograph.

DEAR SIR,—In your March "Special Pages" you gave a recipe for the making of a hektograph, or copier. As this was the very thing I had been looking for for some time, I started to make it, as per recipe. The first half of the programme, relative to the gelatine, etc., in spite of the sparseness of the recipe, was an unqualified success. Next came the ink. Having sent for the various ingredients (of which the aniline dye arrived in powder) I started to make the ink. It seemed obvious that with the large amount of powder and small proportion of liquids, a stiff paste would ensue; but, having strong faith in THE CAPTAIN, I proceeded. In mixing, a small portion of the powder got on my hands; this I blew off and put my hands under the tap; but I have not yet (two days later) got my hands right in spite of pumice, etc. The ink (!) was solid! I put it under the pump, and pumped on it some hundreds of gallons, which dyed everything for yards around, myself included, with spray, etc. On visiting the pot in which I had brewed my concoction twenty-four hours later—in spite of gallons more water—I could perceive no appreciable difference in the density. The ponds are to my mind purple; everything in the house is permeated with it. However, by diluting some of the pond I tried a copy on the gelatine, which came off fine on the gelatine, but not on the next bit of blank paper; neither would the impress wash off.—I am, yours, waiting-for-some-explicit-instructions,

K. R. W.

[Will T. H. Durrans, who sent this recipe, kindly supply us with more "explicit instructions"?—O.F.]



THE HANDY MAN.
By James Dale.

Curious Anagrams.

(Sent by H. E. Inger.)

Napoleon Bonaparte.	Bona rapta, pone leno.
Horatio Nelson.	Honor est a Nilo.
Old England.	Golden land.
Radical reform.	Rare mad frolic.
Parishioners.	I hire parsons.
John Abernethy.	Johnny the bear.
Disappointment.	Made in pint pots.
Matrimony.	Into my arm.
Lawyers.	Sly ware.
Arithmetic.	Tire him, cat.
Enough.	One hug.
Telegraph.	Great help.
Ah! would ye lose strife?	Do haste, sell your wife.
Florence Nightingale.	Flit on, cheering angel.
Sweetheart.	There we sat.
Naiad.	Diana.

OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS.

Henry Graves.—Let me see. Say *ten* means top marks. I think I will give your drawings *six*.

J. S. Bithell.—See reply to "Mr. F. Tucker."

H. O. Weller.—Seven marks.

Du Rennes.—Why not draw it properly on cardboard in Indian ink?

Lewis Watt.—I have asked T. H. Durrans to send some more particulars *re* that hektograph.

J. P. Grandidied.—As the school reports say, you "show promise."

Dora M. Watts.—"A Midnight Adventure" deals with a very hackneyed subject—"burglars," to wit. It is fairly well written. Try and think of something more original.

John Cairns, Junr.—A number of correspondents inform me that your joke, "Since His Time," is not original. Please explain this.

"Mr." F. Tucker.—Drawings should be done on Bristol board—not on scraps of paper. Try again that way.

"Leslie."—You remembered the dialogue very well, and set it down on paper well, but it is not quite the sort of thing for "THE CAP."

P. Y. Johnson.—No room for ninety-six angles.

Charles G. McClure.—Joke accepted; drawing D.W.T.

James Noakes.—Rhymes not very good. "Leveson-Gower" is pronounced "Lewson-Gore."

Nil Desperandum.—Thanks for photo. A prize, however, can only be obtained by original work.

H. Chamberlain.—Of the drawings you send, that of "the Head" reading his paper is the best.

A. G. Simmons.—Your drawing shows merit, and the joke is good. See reply to "Mr. F. Tucker."

D. McM. Muir.—Not badly done. Not good enough to reproduce, though. See reply to "Du Rennes."

J. B. Gould (Ottawa).—Glad to hear from you. Sorry no space for "Camp Cook."

Babe.—Rather a bright style, but bad punctuation. Write more carefully, and endeavour to be *original*.

Puzzles.—Thank you, sir.

Harold Keeley.—Not good enough to print.

A. S. Goldstein.—You show such promise as a versifier that I am sorry you content yourself with parodies. Try and write original verses—don't copy other people's metre and melody.

Fifteen on Cronje Day.—I hope to use your little essay.

Hymans de Tiel.—Not funny enough.

Bennett George.—No harm in trying, certainly. Your idea for a comp. is good.

Stephen Parker.—Your story is no better (and certainly no worse) than the average report of a football match in the newspapers. It is not rubbish.

H. A. Dawson, Ralph Roberts, "H. Y. Flier," "Ladysmith," Dorothy Owen, C. Kohan, B. Cummings, Arthur S. Loyd, G. Barclay, Leonard John Special, H. Barnshaw, G. R. Day, N. R. Rawson, A. T. Belfrage, H. L. David, Eustace A. Elliott, John Davison, "Camel," W. Pakenham, W. J. Leech, A. Maunder, Keith Moore, "The Rat," H. Skrine, Raphael Thomas, "F. A. K.," Marion, A. Cassels, H. Krall, "Briton," also sent contributions.

[N.B.—*Those who are not mentioned here will understand that their contributions arrived too late to be dealt with in this number.*]

"CAPTAIN" COMPETITIONS FOR MAY.

NOTICE.—As previously announced, we have decided to abolish the coupon system, so that readers may enter for as many competitions as they like. In future, at the top of the first page the following particulars must be clearly written, thus:

Competition No. ——, Class ——, Name ——,
Address ——, Age ——.

CONDITIONS.—The highest age limit is twenty-five.

Letters to the Editor should not be sent with competitions.

We trust to your honour to send in unaided work.

GIRLS may compete.

You may enter for as many competitions as you like. Each "comp." must be sent in a separate envelope, or, when possible, on a post-card.

In every case the Editor's decision is final, and he cannot enter into correspondence with unsuccessful competitors.

Pages should be connected with paper-fasteners; not pins.

Address envelopes and post-cards as follows:—Competition No. ——, Class ——, "The Captain," 12, Burleigh Street, Strand, London.

All competitions should reach us by May 12th.

No. 1.—**"Probable Inventions of the Twentieth Century."** Three prizes of 7s. each will be awarded to the senders of the three best lists of "probable inventions."

Class I.	Age limit: Twenty-five.
Class II.	Age limit: Twenty.
Class III.	Age limit: Sixteen.

No. 2.—**"Map of Canada."** Three prizes of 10s. 6d. each will be awarded to the senders of the three best maps of Canada. Neatness and accuracy of name positions are always taken into consideration.

Class I.	Age limit: Twenty-one.
Class II.	Age limit: Eighteen.
Class III.	Age limit: Fifteen.

No. 3.—**"A Mixed Line Paragraph."** Here is an anecdote about the Archbishop of Canterbury. Make it read properly. We have mixed up *the order of the lines*, but not the words. The first and last lines are in their right order.

The Archbishop of Canterbury received
was the reply, "is to indicate your future, my
be "snapped," the Bishop remarked to the "old
his early education at Peter Blundell's School,
lord—you are to be the Archbishop." Not all
Tiverton. Prior to the removal of the school to
main building, they were under an arch. "That,"
Horsden, Dr. Temple, then Bishop of Exeter,
been changed—instead of standing in front of the
attended the Old Boys' Festival with marked regu-
one occasion, just as the photograph was about to
larity, and consequently he figured prominently in
the photographs which were annually taken. On
boy" next him that the scene of the picture had
prophecies come so near the mark.

Three "Swan" Fountain Pens will be awarded to the senders of the three most correctly rearranged paragraphs.

Class I.	Age limit: Twenty.
Class II.	Age limit: Sixteen.
Class III.	Age limit: Twelve.

No. 4.—**"Gentlemen v. Players."** Write down what you think will be the teams of Gentlemen and Players chosen to play against each other on July 9th, at the Oval. The prizes will be awarded to the senders of the three lists which happen to be nearest to the actual teams chosen. Three Cricket Bats (kindly selected by Mr. C. B. Fry), will be the prizes.

Class I.	Age limit: Twenty-one.
Class II.	Age limit: Eighteen.
Class III.	Age limit: Fifteen.

No. 5.—**"Sketch Out-of-Doors."** Three prizes of 7s. each will be awarded to the senders of the three best sketches out-of-doors, in pen, pencil, or water-colours.

Class I.	Age limit: Twenty-five.
Class II.	Age limit: Twenty.
Class III.	Age limit: Sixteen.

No. 6.—**"Sphinx's Puzzles."** (See back of Frontispiece and p. 179.) Three prizes of 7s. will be awarded to the senders of the three best sets of solutions to these puzzles.

Class I.	Age limit: Twenty-five.
Class II.	Age limit: Sixteen.
Class III.	Age limit: Twelve.

NOTE.—As a number of Competitors seem hazy on this point, let them understand, once and for all, that a Competitor may enter for (say) an age limit 25 comp., so long as he has not actually turned 26. The same rule applies to all the other age limits.

Example, as we all know, is a tremendous force. I want to say a word this month on the influence the big boys in a school can bring to bear on the boys who are not so old as themselves, for good or—for evil.

We human beings are like a lot of sheep. Most of us are ordinary sheep, but here and there you find a bell-wether, and the others all follow him. So it is in schools. I have known whole schools to be ruined by the bad example of a small but very powerful band of seniors; on the other hand, I have known whole schools to be raised and ennobled by the "straight," pure, honourable influence of a few stalwarts in the Sixth who resolutely set their faces against everything that was bad, and battled with all their might for the right—and *won!*

WINTER IN THE GLEN.

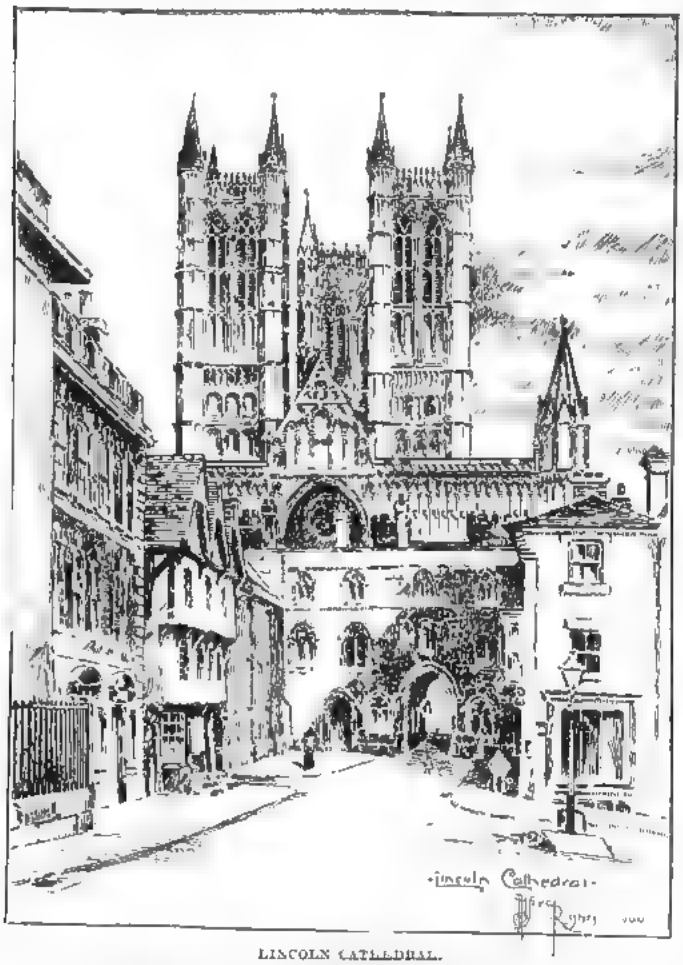
By C. Claude D. I'Anson, Winner of First Prize, Competition III., Class I., March, 1900.

One boy in a dormitory, who is determined that he will never swerve from that code of healthy honour which he has adopted as his own, will soon come to be recognised as a *leader* by the weaker characters in his neighbourhood. They will gather round his banner, and he will become the general of a little army of "Christian soldiers." I am not talking of the whining fellow whose mouth is full of religious tags—I am talking of the boy who does not fear to do what is right, and is not afraid of being laughed at, and who knows that it is as gallant a thing to face a storm of sneers, as to march through a shower of bullets.

The time is coming when every young fellow in this country will have to bear arms and learn how to be a soldier without actually wearing a uniform. Therefore, all you boys, see that you grow up fine, strong men, who will not be put aside on account of weakly constitutions or narrow chests. Now is the time that you are making bone and muscle. Live clean, wholesome lives, and grow up to be fine and brave fellows of whom your country will be justly proud!

Example will tell—must always tell. I call upon the many thousands of big fellows that abound in our schools to join hands with me and fight this manful battle in their own little worlds. A sure reward will come to those who do so, for he who does what is right, without

fear or shame, will leave school and look the world in the face, knowing that the record he leaves behind him is that of a gentleman of the very highest type. So I'm hoping you will take my few words as they are meant—as the words of an old fellow who has been through the mill and wants to see you all through safe and sound as well. The Old Fag "don't feel like preachin'," so he'll end his little sermon with a big hope that you'll rally round and run "all square."



LINCOLN CATHEDRAL.
By Alfred Rigby, Winner of First Prize, Competition III., Class II., March, 1900.

Two kids—I mean, young gentlemen—who call themselves "Kitchener Smith" and "Buller Jones," actually want me to send them to the front as correspondents to this magazine. Their ages are, respectively, twelve and fourteen. One says that he can work a kodak, and the other that he's been thrown off his pony so many times that he's sure he'll be able to "stick on" soon. They suggest that I shall provide them with "mounts," free passages to the Cape, and khaki suits. If anyone has ever heard anything cooler than this outside a refrigerator let him say so.

The following sensible comment on the purposes of a stamp collection is from the pen of the editor of our leading American stamp journal—the *American Journal of Philately*. He says:—

> The ideal philatelist is one who collects for the sake of collecting, not for speculation; who views his stamps from time to time with more or less pleasure, according to their number, class, or condition, not according to catalogue fluctuations; who is in philately to stay, and not constantly estimating the probable nett cash value of his collection at a forced sale. . . . The man who takes a real pleasure in the stamps themselves will thereby be amply repaid for his outlay, and, in addition, will find to his probable delight that, over long periods of time, and excepting lines unduly boomed, good specimens always increase in value.

"Night" sends the following amusing anecdote:—

> I was looking at the Transvaal War Group at Madame Tussaud's, when two "'Arriettes" arrived alongside me. After spelling out several of the names they came to the President of the Transvaal. "Is that Kroojer?" exclaimed one of them, "why, I always thought 'e was *a black feller!*" "An' so did I!" said the other.

Long Jump Record.—The winter term number of *Danensis* (the Doncaster Grammar School Magazine) contains the following note:—

The School Athletic Sports of 1899 are memorable for a long jump by T. E. F. Turner, of 20ft. 1in. This is, we believe, a public school record.

Tallest and Heaviest School-boy.—Once, at Henley Regatta, the appearance of Eton College crew provoked an American visitor to remark: "If these are your *boys*, where are your *men?*" It has struck me that our schools must, here and there, boast some very big fellows. I should like to know of any particularly tall or heavy (or both) *boys* actually at school, and to receive measurements "of same."

Pictures by Readers.—Beyond a doubt some very clever young artists are numbered among the readers of THE CAPTAIN. Herewith I reproduce some of the best things sent in for Competition III. (March).

G. Barclay wishes to know the order of non-commissioned officers in an infantry regiment. The list is as follows:—

Regimental Sergeant-Major.	Sergeant.
Quarter-master Sergeant.	Lance-Sergeant.
Paymaster Sergeant.	Corporal.
Colour-Sergeant.	Lance-Corporal.

The following advertisement appeared lately in a paper published in a town near Brisbane:—

"Permanent.—Wanted a man to look after one horse, and a few cows and pigs. One who can impart the rudiments of French, singing, and the piano to children preferred."

Owing to the very urgent claims of the war funds upon the sympathy of a generous public, the finances of a home charity have, on that account, suffered very considerably. I refer to the "Seaside Camp for London Working Boys"—a society which sends poor London lads away to the seaside for a week's holiday in the hot weather—a society well worthy of support. I think it would be a good idea if a few collections were held in our public school "chapels" in its aid. The secretary's address is, "The Seaside Camp for London Working Boys," Northumberland Chambers, Charing Cross, London, W.C.

A LANDSCAPE.

By C. H. Leigh, Winner of First Prize, Competition III., Class III., March, 1900.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

(Held over from April.)

Vincent Witty.—(1) Colonel Roosevelt's book, "The Rough Riders," is published by Messrs. Kegan, Paul & Co. (2) I believe people who search for articles, etc., advertise their names on the front page of the *Athenæum*.

H. A.—Sketches must be original, i.e., drawn from life or from imagination.

"**Farthest North.**"—To remove tattoo marks wash the affected parts thoroughly with common dilute acetic acid. Half-an-hour later use: Caustic potash, 4 grains: water, 1oz. After a lapse of another half-hour: Dilute hydrochloric acid, 1 drachm; water, 1oz. This should be repeated daily. Stronger solutions may be applied if they can be borne.

"**Lenore.**"—Messrs. Macmillan & Co. publish a biography of Dr. Arnold of Rugby, consisting of two volumes at 6s. each. His sermons to the Rugby boys were published in book form some years ago, but they are now out of print and are only to be obtained through a secondhand bookseller; there were six volumes, and the publishers' price was 5s. each.

Thomas H. Maw reproves me for having poetry comps., and suggests more photographic comps. He admits that he doesn't care a rap about poetry, and dotes on photography. Well, "Thomas H. Maw," how about readers who don't care a rap about photos and dote on poetry? You must allow me to give everybody a turn, if you please.

F. Logie Armstrong.—I thank you for sending photo of Montreal High School. Mr. Foster has written an article on the Navy for this number.

F. B. (Eton College).—Write to Messrs. Hampson Bettridge, 35 and 37, Cloth Fair, West Smithfield, E.C., who supply all the wants of amateur bookbinders.

An Encroaching Girl.—(1) I am glad you read Oliver Wendell Holmes; he is one of my favourite authors, too. (2) No, I don't live in Surrey, but at the same time I agree with you that Surrey is one of the most beautiful counties in England.

(May.)

K. C. M. G.—Your reproof to hand. I will go to some secluded glade and think it over. I think I should like to have an office on the top of Snowdon. There, at least, I should be undisturbed by callers.

Penwyp.—I cannot recommend you to buy any typewriter at the low price of 30s. I should advise you to save up your money until you have got about £5, and then you can get a second-hand machine of a well-known make. Typewriters are intricate pieces of machinery, you know, and are not to be had "cheap."

W. S. S., W. D. (Glasgow).—Editors of school magazines ought to exchange copies with other editors (most of them do), and then study their contemporaries with a view to improving their own productions.

H. Fears.—Many thanks for your beautiful violets.

"Parvum-in-Multo."—For the private study of the Spanish language, I would advise you to get the following books: Hugo's "Spanish Grammar," Parts I. and II., price 6d. each; Bustamante's "Spanish Dictionary," published at 5s. You could obtain all of these through a local bookseller.

Bobsman.—(1) I am always being asked that question. No, I never was editor of *British Boys*. (2) Seeing how many words you can get on to a postcard is an eye-spoiling and useless occupation.

G. C. T.—Mr. Foster will tell you about volunteer officers next month. I like your khaki notepaper.

R. Harris sends me nine unused competition coupons. Thank you, "R. Harris."

Dux wonders what "Smite-Them-Hip-and-Thigh" is like! (By the way, that young lady has brought me a host of letters.) "Dux" seems to be a manly sort of chap. He has plenty of friends, both boys and girls, and does not run to extremes in his criticism of either kind.

G. M. F.—(1) Your writing is very clear. When you write, don't write fast, don't crowd it, and give every letter its full value. (2) Yes, I should say the "Eastern Telegraph" is an excellent thing to work up for. (3) I'll think over that other request.

Stockportonion.—(1) Detective tales have been "done to death." (2) I hope to use your suggestion for a comp. Thanks.

Bugle.—A jolly letter. I'm so sorry you have to go to school in a town. I will put your primroses on my desk, and just a few in my button-hole, eh?

Balgay.—Your letter is a queer mixture. You seem to have got into very undesirable company. Your best course will be to have done with the whole lot, and make some new friends of a more steady character.

Percy G. Bell (Winnipeg) sends me a photo of buffaloes, and a long and interesting letter as well. He wants to get a little magazine out (not printed), so I should advise him to buy a hektograph, or something of that sort from a stationer, who will give him instructions as to its use.

C. A. L. (Brighton).—I think "Card Conjuring," by Professor Ellis Stanyon, published by Upcott Gill at a shilling, will meet your requirements.

Annie M. F. despises "Wuggs" for saying he wishes he were a girl. If "Wuggs" could read her sensible letter he would turn—*blue*.

Friendly Critic.—Suggestions carefully digested. I'll manage to please you all somehow, *some* day.

W. T. Hood.—Send your waltz to the musical publishers, enclosing stamps for return. Have you not a clever musical friend who can tell you whether it is worth sending round in this way?

G. C. T. (Haslemere).—Subscribe to the *Model Engineer and Amateur Electrician*, price 2d. monthly.

Backers up of "The Captain."—What ho, my hearties! Your united letter warmed every corner of my ancient heart. You want to know what to do when you feel "uppish." Why, get somebody to knock you "downish," of c-o-u-r-s-e!

Scapegoat.—Send a stamped envelope, and I will give you all the advice in my power.

Solitaire.—"Dear Sir,—How do you like *this* number?—Yours faithfully, the O.F."

REGINALD SEAGER.
Captain of Cricket, Friends' High School, Hobart, Tasmania.

Henry Kingscote.—Don't want any conjuring tricks just now, thanks.

R. E. (Hessle Hull).—(1) "The Complete Art of Making Fireworks," by Thomas Kentish, price 5s., published by Chatto & Windus. (2) "The Royal Navy," published by Swan Sonnenschein at eighteenpence.

G. Caudle and "Volunteer."—Go to the nearest volunteer drill-hall in your neighbourhood, and tell the adjutant of the corps, or the sergeant-major, that you want to join. Better still, get a volunteer friend to introduce you. When you get to the drill-hall you'll be told very plainly whether you'll do or not.

Elaine.—"A Page of Curious Pets," belonging to Captain readers, is a good idea. If any Members of the Crew keep curious pets, will they send me photographs of same?

Inquisitive.—Eat a light supper, then, and have some cocoa before you go out in the morning.

W. J. P.—Of course, a private soldier wearing a V.C. medal is expected to salute an officer.

"Vet."—Certainly I will pass an opinion on your little paper. Enclose a wrapper for the return of it, and a stamp for the letter.

Stoney-Broke.—I give an "expired" volume.

A Lover of Dark Blue.—Gently, young sir! "Awfully beastly," indeed! If you don't mend your manners I shall call at Rutland Gate with some boiling oil or molten lead.

Friendly Critic.—I have read your letter very carefully, and am keeping it by me to read again.

James Angus.—Thanks for the cutting you send. Will use it if I can find room.

The Baby.—To be sure I will put something in your autograph album, but remember to enclose stamps for return.

First Mate.—Mr. John Mackie has promised to send us some dispatches "from the Front."

H. A. F. (King's Cross).—Messrs. J. Levy Turner, of 39, Oxford Street, W., publish a "Military Bugle

and Post-horn Tutor," containing all the army calls both cavalry and infantry). The price is 1s.

Admirer of B. P.—"Mafeking" is pronounced "Maff-é-king."

In Doubt.—Don't pay them a penny. If they persist, inform the police.

"Wykehamists at the Front."—Clifton contributed 160 Old Boys to the army in South Africa, but "A Present Wykehamist" sends me a list of *two hundred and twenty* Old Winchester Boys who are now at the Front. Nearly every cavalry and infantry regiment is represented here, as well as the various colonial corps, militia, yeomanry, and volunteers.

Other Correspondents.—"An Old Glasgow High School Boy," E. S. Lindley, Lady Ursula Barrington, "Fish," "Floreat Redingensis," A. B. F., F. W. J. W., N. R. Rawson, G. J. Allen, "M. M." (St. Bees), "Dolly M. C. T. A.," Allan Biggam, Walter Bligh, J. F. Dulley (photo of Westminster City School), "T. W. A." (New York), Violet C. Strover, and "An Admirer," are thanked for photos, letters, criticisms, and suggestions.

A number of answers are held over till next month.

THE OLD FAG.

Results of March Competitions.

No. I.—Best Prose Extract on "Patriotism."

CLASS I. (Age limit: Twenty-five.)

WINNER OF 7s.: NORA K. BROWNE, "Oakhurst," Christchurch Road, Tulse Hill.

HONOURABLE MENTION: A. K. Morgan, Dorothy Evans.

CLASS II. (Age limit: Twenty.)

WINNER OF 7s.: G. WAINWRIGHT, 9, Alexandra Road Station, Alexandra Park, Manchester.

CONSOLATION PRIZES have been awarded to: A. M. COULTON, c/o Dr. Emerson, "The Nook," Oulton Broad, near Lowestoft; and E. A. MILLER, 19, Victoria Park, Shipley, Yorks.

HONOURABLE MENTION: H. M. Westerdale, K. Hathaway, Marcelle Colignon, Hilda Gilling, Kathleen Rogers, Ethel Goulden, Grace Durand.

CLASS III. (Age limit: Sixteen.)

WINNER OF 7s.: EDWIN E. E. TODD, 31, Shandwick Place, Edinburgh.

A CONSOLATION PRIZE has been awarded to: R. H. SOUTHERN, "The Vicarage," Charing Heath, Ashford, Kent.

HONOURABLE MENTION: A. G. Roper, Gladys Laughton, Eric Davies, A. E. Forrest, A. D. Stedman, Jack Loutet, T. Westerdale, S. J. Moses, E. A. Anthony, J. Haworth, F. Sykes, Henry Smith.

No. II.—Chess Problem. (*Vide* "CAPTAIN Chess Corner," p. 181.)

No. III.—Best "Landscape in Colour, Pencil, Indian ink," etc.

CLASS I. (Age limit: Twenty-five.)

WINNER OF SET OF DRAWING MATERIALS: CLAUDE D. J'ANSON, 52, Holland Road, Kensington, W.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Violet Ladell, Cyril Edwyn Ozanne.

CLASS II. (Age limit: Twenty.)

WINNER OF SET OF DRAWING MATERIALS: ALFRED RIGBY, 6, Springbridge Road, Alexandra Park, Manchester.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Constance E. Stone, H. W. Penny, G. Wainwright, Bessie W. Rankin, A. S. Atkinson, Gladys Haslewood, Mabel Le Maistre, W. G. Heap, W. Richards, Mary Moreton, S. O'Neill, E. H. Banks, C. F. M. Arathoon, C. May Ozanne, F. A. Allen, Maud F. A. Cunare, John Birmingham, R. McCombe, J. H. Parsonage, T. A. Macallan, N. West, S. P. Heminsley, J. McArdle, Mary J. Gilbertson.

CLASS III. (Age limit: Sixteen.)

WINNER OF SET OF DRAWING MATERIALS: C. H. LEIGH, 68, Grand Parade, Brighton.

HONOURABLE MENTION: John Gauld, Ruby Rankin, H. S. Chamberlain, E. A. Leigh, G. R. Grieve, J. M. Smith, R. Jeans, Gladys Scantlebury, Tom Riley, R. S. Murrie, Nora Pocock, Clarence Wilkes, W. Matthews, F. L. Oliver, A. Barnes, Mary Beckhusen, Mildred Asbury, Oliver Gossman, Maude Pease, P. Bartlett.

No. IV.—Best Short Story or Essay on "A Girl's Ideal Holiday." (Girls only.)

CLASS I. (Age limit: Twenty-five.)

WINNER OF CASE OF SCENT: M. EVELYN CUTHBERT, 2, Vesey Terrace, Garville Avenue, Rathgar, Dublin.

HONOURABLE MENTION: K. Black, E. G. Ewen Watson, Frances A. Hicks.

CLASS II. (Age limit? Twenty.)

WINNER OF SILVER-MOUNTED BLOTTER: LILIAN ORMISTON, "Cameronian Cottage," Brynhyfryd, Swansea.

CONSOLATION PRIZES have been awarded to: IRENE MAUNDER, 86, Trywhitt Road, St. John's, S.E.; and MARION DICKEN, "Dhoon Villa," Willingdon Road, Eastbourne.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Elsie T. Bazeley, Gertrude Argyle, Eleanor Stuff, Bertha C. Wilson, Constance C. Crombie, Maude Carrare, Winnie Flashman, Janie Lattle, Dorothy Armstrong.

CLASS III. (Age limit: Sixteen.)

WINNER OF AN AUTOGRAPH OR STAMP ALBUM: MABEL IRENE FALKNER, "Balfour House," Grand Parade, Portsmouth.

CONSOLATION PRIZES have been awarded to: IRIS KINGSCOTE, Poste Restante, Boulogne-sur-Mer, France; and MAGGIE SMITH, "Frisby," Gordon Hill, Enfield.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Elsie Morris, Violet Strover, Gwendolen Braddell, Peggy Roelick, Elsie Dare, M. I. Berkeley, Jennie Clasper.

No. V.—Best Coast-line Map of Great Britain marking ports, and stating what each is noted for. (Boys only.)

CLASS I. (Age limit: Twenty.)

WINNER OF CRICKET BAT: R. PERCY DURST, 50, Rowfant Road, Balham.

HONOURABLE MENTION: John E. Davies, J. E. Needham, H. S. Spain, H. C. Spain, C. E. Morris, G. Charters, A. N. Ruddock, H. A. Caulkin, R. E. Caron, H. H. Chettle, Norman Parley, W. R. Vine, W. T. Elliott, H. O. Weller, J. C. Craig, J. S. Lewis, C. W. Pike, J. A. Forster, H. J. Beardsley, B. H. E. Price.

CLASS II. (Age limit: Sixteen.)

WINNER OF CRICKET BAT: DAVID PRYDE, 74, Daikeith Road, Edinburgh.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Tom Street, H. R. Morris, H. R. Williamson, L. Ripley, N. Freeman, L. J. Smith, P. Moore, H. Whitaker, W. M. Parkins, F. W. Watkins, A. E. Birmingham, T. Linton, A. H. Davies, V. McCann, B. Bennett, C. W. Cudman, E. Marsden, L. P. Ward, D'Arcy V. Pickett, P. H. Aveling, B. Priestman, E. Baldwin, P. Scammell, R. Brocklebank, W. L. Scott, J. Gauld, A. T. Belfrage, P. R. Butler, D. McKenzie, W. R. Goldsmith, H. A. Rayner, C. H. Ilsley, H. S. Chamberlain, B. Houseman, A. L. Ilsley, G. S. W. Ross.

CLASS III. (Age limit: Twelve.)

WINNER OF CRICKET BAT: H. J. HALL, 80, Leathwaite Road, Clapham Common.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Walter E. Lewin, W. Mend, C. F. Parsons, D. H. Smart, A. C. Green, H. F. Cree, L. G. Hare, Charles Robinson, A. Kingscote, H. R. F. Kingscote, M. D. Evans, P. B. Stoner, C. T. Eastman, W. Wainwright.

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